

UC Berkeley Graduate Division

Campus Staff Evaluation of Graduate Division Services Survey 2010

Introduction

The Graduate Division has undergone several reorganizations, experienced significant leadership changes, and absorbed major budget cuts in the last decade. The Division has also undertaken efforts to streamline business processes, improve services, and create permanent savings. Simultaneously, our campus (and the UC system as a whole) has experienced increased public scrutiny, prompting the need to develop new accountability measures. The campus has also embarked in Operational Excellence, an ambitious project to study and develop options that will improve operations and reduce costs. In this context, the Graduate Services Survey was developed. It is intended to assess the Division's effectiveness as a central campus unit and guide the development of concrete plans for further betterment.

Methods

The survey was designed to collect feedback from university staff members about the quality of Graduate Division services. Divisional Directors devised and/or approved the functions on which their services would be rated. These items were compiled into the online survey form by the Graduate Division Office of Planning and Research (see Appendix A).

The online survey was administered to campus staff members extracted from the Graduate Division's contact database. To increase response rate and promote honest assessment, assurances were made to respondents that individual responses would remain confidential. Ratings appear in tabular form and open responses were categorized and summarized by content, removing any references that may identify an individual.

The survey ran from May 12 to May 28, 2010. One reminder was sent to the portion of the sample that did not respond to the initial invitation. Of the 307 staff members who were contacted, 155 responded, approximately a 50% response rate. The Graduate Division enjoys a highly engaged and supportive constituency on campus. Within four hours of launching the survey, 20% had already responded. Many of our respondents took time to provide positive feedback as well as offer concrete ideas for making improvements in the future.

The CAO presented initial findings to Graduate Division deans, directors, and supervisors. A written report with tabulated results and summarized comments was then provided to the same groups. Owners of the assessed services were asked to discuss the findings with their staffs, develop a response, and formulate goals to address challenges identified by the survey. Results will be presented at an All-Staff meeting.

Results and Action Plans

Overall

Of the staff that responded to the survey, the number of staff reporting that they interacted with a particular part of Graduate Division can provide a good estimate of the demand for services from each office. Survey respondents most frequently indicated that they interacted with Offices of Admissions, Fellowships, Degrees and the GLOW information system (Table 1).

Table 1. Reported interaction of respondents with Graduate Division offices

During the past year(2009-2010),	Yes		No		All	
Did you interact with the Graduate Division Admissions office	108	72.4%	41	27.5%	149	100.0%
Did you interact with the Graduate Division Fellowships office	96	67.6%	46	32.3%	142	100.0%
Did you interact with the Graduate Division Degrees office	103	73.5%	37	26.4%	140	100.0%
Have you been in contact with the GSI Teaching and Resource Center	74	53.2%	65	46.7%	139	100.0%
Did you access GLOW at any time	97	70.8%	40	29.1%	137	100.0%

During the past year(2009-2010),	Yes		No		All	
Did you interact with the Graduate Division Appointments office	71	52.9%	63	47.0%	134	100.0%
Did you interact with the Graduate Diversity Program	42	31.5%	91	68.4%	133	100.0%
Did you interact with the Graduate Academic Services office	28	21.0%	105	78.9%	133	100.0%
Did you interact with the Office of the Graduate Dean	76	57.1%	57	42.8%	133	100.0%

Overall estimations of quality of Graduate Division offices are very high. On average, almost 50% of respondents rated offices as excellent. The overall quality ratings are congruent with Graduate Division’s staff performance evaluations and record of staff awards. The offices receiving the highest ratings were Fellowships, Appointments, and the GSI Teaching and Resource Center.

Table 2. Overall estimated quality of Graduate Division offices

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Admissions	49	55.0%	36	40.4%	3	3.3%	1	1.1%	89	100.0%
Fellowships	53	65.4%	23	28.3%	5	6.1%	.	.	81	100.0%
Degrees	10	12.0%	39	46.9%	26	31.3%	8	9.6%	83	100.0%
GSI Teaching and Resource Center	37	60.6%	20	32.7%	4	6.5%	.	.	61	100.0%
GLOW	38	44.7%	39	45.8%	7	8.2%	1	1.1%	85	100.0%
Appointments	42	64.6%	19	29.2%	4	6.1%	.	.	65	100.0%
Graduate Diversity Program	14	45.1%	11	35.4%	6	19.3%	.	.	31	100.0%
Academic Services	9	45.0%	10	50.0%	1	5.0%	.	.	20	100.0%
Dean's Office	33	52.3%	27	42.8%	3	4.7%	.	.	63	100.0%

Across units, the category “Prompt response to inquiries” (the first question in most unit-specific sections) was rated relatively low within offices with high levels of customer interaction. Degrees was rated 50% Fair to Poor, and Admissions and Fellowships both received a 13% Fair rating in this category.

Admissions Office

The Graduate Admissions office manages the online graduate application and is responsible for evaluating the admission recommendations submitted by departments.

Table 3. Ratings of services provided by the Admissions office

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Prompt response to inquiries	48	48.9%	36	36.7%	13	13.2%	1	1.0%	98	100.0%
Ability of staff to provide assistance in solving problems	51	52.5%	38	39.1%	7	7.2%	1	1.0%	97	100.0%
Availability of information on requirements or deadlines	49	53.8%	36	39.5%	5	5.4%	1	1.0%	91	100.0%
Process of admitting students	50	57.4%	33	37.9%	4	4.5%	.	.	87	100.0%
<i>Overall quality</i>	49	55.0%	36	40.4%	3	3.3%	1	1.1%	89	100.0%

Of the 95 comments left by respondents in the open-ended questions about the Admissions office, over half were positive (53). More than two-thirds of the positive responses commented on how staff members are helpful, responsive and/or knowledgeable.

Respondents praised the admissions staff for significant improvements in service over the past year. The ability to reach an admissions staff person over the phone was prevalent in the positive comments about the admissions office; however the curtailed hours of phone service was most frequently mentioned as a source of frustration. One suggestion to improve service was the establishment of a separate phone number for department staff to call that would be answered right away.

Unfortunately, due to staff reductions, we had to implement the curtailed hours in order to process the required work load. However, a separate phone number has now been provided to departments that need to reach us from 8 to 5. An e-mail was sent to departments informing them of the admissions new office hours and the department phone line (642-7407).

Some information provided on the website to applicants was noted as being incomplete or inaccurate. For example, the direction given to applicants for re-admission was thought to be incorrect. Some respondents criticized the lag or unhelpfulness of email replies to applicants. For example, the generic FAQ sent as an auto-reply to all emails during admissions season was considered confusing to applicants looking for the answer to a specific question. \

We have implemented the auto e-mail response to help with the large volume of e-mails received daily during the application deadlines. We followed the model used at Stanford. We understand that some people found it confusing or did not read the instructions. We will work to streamline this process for the next application cycle. E-mails were always answered within a 24 hour period with the exception of the weekends.

Other recommendations about the admissions office were focused on procedure. Respondents, for example, cited a delay in matching GRE scores to applicant records and missing transcripts. For departments that require official transcripts only after admission, the delay caused by the processing resulted in some confusion for applicants waiting confirmation of admission.

ETS scores are processed as priority during the months of December to March, otherwise once a week.

GRE and TOEFL scores are loaded into our database, and then matched to applications by IS&T programmers, up to three times per week. We will need to find out what is perceived as “delay.”

Respondents indicated that service levels were not even across staff members.
Last year we changed the evaluation process. We began the cross training for all countries.

Specific suggestions for the online application:

- Create an information portal for GSAOs to easily check on the status of applications
- Fine-tune the automatic notifications to students from the application system because this is often the first contact with future students
- Create a separate admitting form for each degree goal within a graduate program (i.e. separate the applicants for a concurrent MBA)
- Provide demographic reports to assist with recruiting, grant writing, fellowship nominations, etc.

Suggestions will be considered for the Jazzee system.

Fellowships office

The Graduate Fellowships office is responsible for most merit-based and merit plus need-based financial awards, and administers university fellowships, departmental block grants, federally funded fellowships, and foundation and corporate awards.

Table 4. Ratings of services provided by the Fellowships office

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Prompt response to inquiries	53	56.3%	28	29.7%	12	12.7%	1	1.0%	94	100.0%
Ability of staff to provide assistance in solving problems	59	63.4%	25	26.8%	9	9.6%	.	.	93	100.0%
Availability of information on requirements or deadlines	50	58.8%	25	29.4%	10	11.7%	.	.	85	100.0%
Assistance with block grant expenditures	52	67.5%	18	23.3%	7	9.0%	.	.	77	100.0%
Coordination of fellowship competition	47	66.1%	20	28.1%	4	5.6%	.	.	71	100.0%
<i>Overall quality</i>	53	65.4%	23	28.3%	5	6.1%	.	.	81	100.0%

Of the 79 comments left by respondents in the open-ended questions about the Fellowships office, over half were positive (48). Respondents most frequently described Fellowships staff members as friendly, helpful, knowledgeable and outstanding.

Many respondents indicated that they preferred the fellowships service model of assigning one individual to a department. Although some complained that they had trouble getting in contact with their specific fellowship staff representative sometimes.

This concern was surprising but has been addressed with all three FAOs. We will remind GSAOs (at the beginning of the academic year), of their contact person in Fellowships.

The most-requested improvement for the fellowships office was online access to block grant and departmentally restricted award information.

- Online submission of block-grant applications/expenditures– *GLOW proposal submitted June 08.*
- Daily tracking of block grant funds used and allocated– *Part of the BG GLOW proposal above.*
- Report fees and NRT separately on Block Grant Award List– *This would require GradLink programming that we are no longer able to do. However, moving forward, this will hopefully be provided in the future when we move Block Grant reporting to GLOW.*
- Ability to see unapplied and final distribution of block grant funds after deadline– *under implementation.*

Other suggestions:

- Berk/Chan fellows be allowed to file a summer report like NSF fellows rather than enroll in summer units
- Reconcile fee remissions more often—*under consideration.*
- Timeliness of resolving unapplied awards– *Implemented changes to reconcile monthly.*
- Provide information on diversity top-offs earlier
- Provide a system so departments can enter information on students' extramural awards—*being explored.*
- Create a database of external fellowships which students can browse online– *There is an existing database that we recommend to students to look for external fellowships. It is the UCLA database: <http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/grpinst.htm> This and other databases are listed on our web page: http://www.grad.berkeley.edu/financial/fellowships_resources.shtml.*
- Webcast FLAS meetings—*to be implemented.*
- Workshop to advise departments on fellowship nominations and offer letters—*we have two meetings planned for January.*

Degrees Office

The Graduate Degrees office monitors readmission, qualifying exams, advancements to candidacy, filing fees, probation, and eligibility for the Dean's Normative Time Fellowship. Master's theses and doctoral dissertations are filed in this office.

The Degrees Office rated along a bell curve, but low relative to all other Graduate Division offices. Between 2002 and 2010, the Degrees Office was assigned six different supervisors (two were Interim; two were moved from their

posts). The circumstances have made it difficult to institute changes to improve the client experience and address procedural inefficiencies.

Table 5. Ratings of services provided by the Degrees office

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Prompt response to inquiries	9	9.0%	39	39.3%	32	32.3%	19	19.1%	99	100.0%
Ability of staff to provide assistance in solving problems	24	24.2%	38	38.3%	28	28.2%	9	9.0%	99	100.0%
Availability of information on requirements or deadlines	29	30.5%	36	37.8%	23	24.2%	7	7.3%	95	100.0%
Process of advancing Ph.D. applications	17	21.7%	36	46.1%	22	28.2%	3	3.8%	78	100.0%
Process of advancing master's applications	14	19.7%	34	47.8%	19	26.7%	4	5.6%	71	100.0%
<i>Overall quality</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>12.0%</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>46.9%</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>31.3%</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9.6%</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Of the 96 comments left by respondents in the open-ended questions about the Degrees office, more than a third were positive (36). Respondents most frequently described the staff members as helpful and willing, but overworked.

Improvements to the degrees office were noted by many respondents, including streamlining processes and providing online access to information. Some positive comments were made about staff members when they are contacted directly, however messages sent to the office email address or messages left on the office voicemail are often subject to a long delay in response time or receive no response at all.

Multiple respondents remarked that the degrees office staff did not seem happy with their jobs. Descriptions of experiences with the staff included answering the phone in an irritated tone of voice or seeming disengaged.

Some respondents noted a lack of clarity on policy and procedure. A perceived lack of consistency among the degrees office staff on process was the most frequent complaint. Some respondents reported that degrees staff directed students and GSAOs to the Graduate Handbook rather than taking time to explain policy. Respondents suggested compiling a FAQ to help resolve some of these problems. Respondents also noted that the turn-around time for paper forms was too long. Forms were reported to be lost during processing. Many suggested that degrees staff should contact the department by phone or email to obtain additional information needed for approval rather than returning forms in campus mail.

Other suggestions:

- Notification that forms are received
- Notification when requests have been completed
- Eliminate the memo as the vehicle for petition/requests – i.e. put forms online or at least create a printable PDF form that has information pre-populated
- Let professional schools handle their own advancements
- Notify GSAOs with sensitive information in a more timely manner
 - Notices of lapsing candidacy
 - Notices of dissertation filing
 - Notices of problems with filing fee applications
 - Degree reports (formerly paper but now unavailable?)
- Notify campus staff when policies or deadlines change
- Move to the fellowships model for providing service to departments

Overall, the degrees unit was happy with the number of positive comments and responses in the survey; the largest percentage of responses in all categories was in the "Good" ranking. This indicates room for growth, but also a good starting place. Our action plan in response to the survey response is as follows:

Turn around time

We intend to create and publish a chart that shows all of our normal processes, the standard turn around time, and any issues that might cause delays. This will have the added benefit of demonstrating to departments the volume of our work at any given time. We have also made a change to the way departments will contact the Degrees staff so that they are more readily available.

Policies and procedures

We are working on creating a Graduate Degrees Handbook for departments, which will include a FAQ for common questions. However, a certain complexity of policies is unavoidable since most are mandated to us either by the Graduate Council, Academic Senate Regulations, UC Office of the President, etc. We're working to simplify or eliminate processes whenever possible.

GLOW

We have a number of GLOW projects in the works that will go a long way toward addressing the suggestions and concerns of our departmental colleagues. These projects include: online comp exam reports, electronic delivery and notification of previously paper-based items, up to date professor's database, department-initiated Filing Fee, and a lot more. Giving departments direct access to many of these processes on GLOW helps all parties involved. Turnaround time is greatly decreased, errors are less frequent, and general accountability is improved.

GSI Teaching and Resource Center

The GSI Teaching and Resource Center provides pedagogical guidance for GSIs, including teaching conferences, the online course Professional Standards and Ethics for GSIs, workshops, course improvement grants, teaching awards, and the Language Proficiency Program for GSIs who do not speak English as a native language.

Table 6. Ratings of services provided by the GSI Teaching and Resource Center

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Timeliness of announcements	39	57.3%	23	33.8%	6	8.8%	.	.	68	100.0%
Assistance in addressing problems	34	59.6%	19	33.3%	3	5.2%	1	1.7%	57	100.0%
Response to email	40	68.9%	16	27.5%	2	3.4%	.	.	58	100.0%
Email communication about programs and requirements	39	58.2%	22	32.8%	5	7.4%	1	1.4%	67	100.0%
Availability of policy information via website	33	50.7%	29	44.6%	3	4.6%	.	.	65	100.0%
Availability of teaching resources via website	36	61.0%	18	30.5%	5	8.4%	.	.	59	100.0%
Response to phone inquiries	35	62.5%	18	32.1%	3	5.3%	.	.	56	100.0%
<i>Overall quality</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>60.6%</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>32.7%</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>6.5%</i>	<i>.</i>	<i>.</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Comments about the GSI Teaching and Resource Center were overwhelmingly positive. Respondents praised staff for their dedication and professionalism, describing the staff as great, terrific or top-notch.

Criticism most often voiced concerned the volume of email that assistants are asked to forward to students. Assistants preferred that the GSI office contact students directly about upcoming workshops.

We will track the announcements to departments over the fall semester to see if there are ways to combine announcements so that the number of announcements is kept as low as possible.

Some respondents requested that GSI Conference certificates be sent directly to students.

Since mailing to individual students is not possible, we will consider other alternatives.

Other suggestions:

- Better record-keeping and online access to list of students who have completed (or failed to complete) ethics and language training

We will be submitting a GLOW proposal this fall to integrate course completion data for the online ethics course into the Graduate Division database. This will enable Graduate Student Services Advisers to track their students' completion of the online ethics course and verify completion before making appointments. Uploading course scores directly into GLOW will lead to greater efficiency and accuracy in maintaining student scores.

We submitted a GLOW proposal in February 2009 to make information about student language proficiency test scores and eligibility for GSI appointments available to departments. We hope to have this new system available in the near future. We greatly appreciate the input we have received on this project from a focus group of Graduate Student Service Advisers.

- Provide English communication course beyond the one required for the SPEAK/OPT tests
We are surveying all GSIs who received a "3-" last spring and fall on the OPT to get a sense of what type of support they would find most helpful.

- Consider merging some of the requirements for first-time GSIs (e.g. conference with union meeting, or ethics with 300-level course)

In our communication with departmental 300-level course instructors, we will clarify expectations about the integration of the online course into the 300-level course.

- Create campus standards for faculty who teach 300-level courses to improve quality

We will communicate with those departments that are initiating the self-study component of the departmental review this year about using the questions developed by the Advisory Committee for GSI Affairs to reflect upon how they are preparing GSIs for teaching. We will also step up our communication with departments about the resources available to assist them in further developing their courses.

GradLink on the Web

GLOW (GradLink-on-the-Web) is Graduate Division's information resource on the web. Staff who work with graduate students and with the Graduate Division can view information about graduate students such as fellowship support and progress towards degree completion.

Table 7. Ratings of services provided by GLOW

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Student Lookup Screens	35	46.6%	26	34.6%	12	16.0%	2	2.6%	75	100.0%
Degree List (degrees awarded in a given semester)	28	43.0%	27	41.5%	9	13.8%	1	1.5%	65	100.0%
Fellowship Competition Results	39	60.0%	25	38.4%	1	1.5%	.	.	65	100.0%
File Dissertation or Master's Thesis List (dissertations filed by students who were awarded degrees in a given semester)	22	39.2%	24	42.8%	10	17.8%	.	.	56	100.0%
Institutional Research Reports (statistical information on graduate education in your department or school)	9	31.0%	13	44.8%	4	13.7%	3	10.3%	29	100.0%
Stewardship Information (information on fellowship funds owned by your department or school)	21	45.6%	20	43.4%	4	8.6%	1	2.1%	46	100.0%
Interim Fee Remissions Data Entry	21	55.2%	14	36.8%	2	5.2%	1	2.6%	38	100.0%
Departmentally Restricted Awards Data Entry	14	37.8%	12	32.4%	7	18.9%	4	10.8%	37	100.0%

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Registration and Enrollment and Compliance Report	26	53.0%	16	32.6%	6	12.2%	1	2.0%	49	100.0%
GLOW tech support	8	27.5%	13	44.8%	7	24.1%	1	3.4%	29	100.0%
<i>Overall quality</i>	38	44.7%	39	45.8%	7	8.2%	1	1.1%	85	100.0%

GLOW received mainly good reviews from a large number of respondents. Many praised the availability of information on individual students to make their jobs easier, especially new features such as award reporting. However, a few respondents criticized the interface as limited and not user-friendly, while others requested additional training to use GLOW. The praise for GLOW was also alloyed with confidence that GLOW would eventually grow to ever more information to facilitate advising work.

The fact that GLOW actually delivered on plans announced in meetings with department staff encouraged survey respondents to suggest even more features. The process of including staff in planning new features was praised, although some reported that they were not aware of these meetings. Some respondents requested follow-up after projects are completed to ensure that users are not experiencing problems. Others requested progress updates on current projects.

Suggestions for GLOW interface improvements:

- Ability to move easily from individual views to lists of individuals with similar characteristics (e.g. being able to see all the students who have the same dissertation chair; all the students who have the same type of funding; etc.)
- Eliminate non-choice pull-down menus
- More "back" or "previous screen" buttons
- Allow multiple year reports to show trends
- Make reports sortable
- Fellowship competition results should be separated between incoming students and continuing students
- Include Chancellors Dissertation Fellowship in competition results
- Ability to see interim fee remissions after deadline (i.e. frozen file)
- Ability to enter interim fee remissions earlier
- Most users could not see institutional research reports
- Restricted awards entry is too cumbersome
 - Awards data entry screens should differentiate between semesters in an AY
 - Indicate which department paid a fee balance or stipend award
 - More timely reports on Dept Res Award Balances

We will include these requests on our next list of projects to be ranked by the GSAOs.

Suggestions for new GLOW information:

- List dept affiliation of outside committee member
- Add dissertation title to the dissertation committee list
- Listing of past and current committee service of a faculty member
- Add residency information
- Access to records of students from other departments that hold an appointment or award from user's department
- Query page for the competition results from previous years
- Ability to respond to degree list online
- Portfolio system for students
- GSI and Teaching Resource Center data
- Displaying graduate student appointment information, including the term, start and end dates of the appointment, the hiring department, title code, percentage, and monthly pay rate (and possibly the compensation by month)

We are in the process of developing GLOW-specific information sessions for our GSAOs.

Appointments Office

The Graduate Appointments office reviews the appointments of graduate students to academic titles (Graduate Student Instructor, Graduate Student Researcher, Reader, Tutor) and staff titles to ensure compliance with university policy and procedures. The office also monitors eligibility for fee and tuition remission programs.

Table 8. Ratings of services provided by the Appointments office

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Prompt response to inquiries	48	69.5%	18	26.0%	3	4.3%	.	.	69	100.0%
Knowledgeability of staff	53	76.8%	15	21.7%	1	1.4%	.	.	69	100.0%
Availability of information on requirements or deadlines	38	59.3%	22	34.3%	3	4.6%	1	1.5%	64	100.0%
<i>Overall quality</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>64.6%</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>29.2%</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>6.1%</i>	<i>.</i>	<i>.</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

Of the 38 comments about the Appointments office 26 were positive. Respondents most often described staff as being knowledgeable and helpful.

Most comments about the appointments office were positive citing the knowledgeable and helpful staff. Although complaints about the lack of policy or process information were mitigated by willingness of staff to answer questions, respondents still requested that policies and deadlines be clarified. For example, one change in policy -- flexibility in exceeding 50% time or GSI appointments below 11 semesters do not require an exception -- was not systematically communicated to the campus.

The revised document for F10, containing the policy change, should be up on the Web this month (7/10).

Also, some respondents questioned why exceptions had to be filed considering that they had all been granted.

Some progress on that front has been made (i.e., delegation of 50% and 9th/10th semester of teaching to the HGAs) Rules and regulations are set by the Graduate Council.

The online interim fee remission was praised as a big improvement.

Other suggestions:

Notify the GSAO when a fee remission is cancelled-- *We will ask that a GLOW-based notification system be created by Systems so that the GSAOs can monitor changes.*

- Difficulties with HCM not calculating fee remission eligibility correctly-- *We are not aware of instances where our automated process has not correctly calculated eligibility for a fee remission. However, we will refer the issue to Systems for investigation.*
- Ability to enter interim fee remissions anytime rather than after a certain date—*We used to allow much earlier entry of interim remissions, but we had to significantly constrain the period during which this could happen because the process was being used to avoid entering hiring data into the campus human resources system, thereby creating a cascade of problems for students (and a potential liability problem for the University).*
- Respondents suggested having a workshop for campus staff, where all can understand the interdependencies of HCM, payroll, CARS, fee remissions, etc.—*We have spent the past several months completely revising and enhancing the “How to Create an Academic Appointment Tutorial”, which has been very successful over the years. In addition, a completely new training resource, “Fee Remission Tutorial,” was developed. The latter fills a void that we knew existed, and the two tutorials taken together provide the information necessary to grasp the appointment and remission connections. New resources have been developed, such as the “Criteria Summary of Eligibility,” “Optional Eligibility Check-List Form,” and the “Fee Remission Path Diagram.” In addition, we have numerous other resources on the Web, many of which have been available for quite some time and which have proven (based on comments*

we receive) to be highly useful to campus staff. The tutorials went up on the Web within the last ten days, and we have already received extremely positive commentary about them. We plan to revise and add to these resources based on feedback.

Graduate Diversity Program

The Graduate Diversity Program Office of Outreach and Retention is a resource for educationally and financially disadvantaged students and underrepresented students throughout their academic careers at Berkeley (reporting to VCEI but housed in Graduate Division).

Table 9. Ratings of services provided by the Graduate Diversity Program

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Prompt response to inquiries	15	46.8%	15	46.8%	2	6.2%	.	.	32	100.0%
Knowledgeability of staff	16	45.7%	15	42.8%	4	11.4%	.	.	35	100.0%
Availability of information on requirements or deadlines	16	48.4%	11	33.3%	5	15.1%	1	3.0%	33	100.0%
<i>Overall quality</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>45.1%</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>35.4%</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>19.3%</i>	.	.	<i>31</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

The Graduate Diversity Program (GDP) received ten open-ended comments. Respondents who reported interaction with GDP were mainly positive, citing help that staff provided in obtaining funding for students and providing information to applicants. Some complaints were forwarded about planning, i.e. departments not given enough lead time to plan for Diversity Day and the Diversity Top-Off Award, or not given enough time to do outreach for the potential applicants contacted during recruitment trips. Better coordination with department diversity initiatives and wider communication of GDP efforts was suggested.

The GDP program does not administer the Top-Off awards. The Fellowships Office will take the timing issue into consideration.

Other suggestions:

- Define diversity broadly enough to include persons with disabilities. A respondent reported that a GDP staff member stated diversity was defined as differences in color.

We recognize that diversity is broadly defined and assist any student, staff, or faculty member who requests our service.

- Put aside funds for tutoring or otherwise accommodating the needs of diverse students on campus

Academic Services Office

The Graduate Division Academic Services office assists graduate students in the development of academic skills necessary for the successful completion of their graduate programs. This office offers workshops, writing groups, and individual consultations for graduate students on topics such as academic writing, grant writing, dissertation writing, editing, and preparing articles for publication.

Table 10. Ratings of services provided by the Academic Services office

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Prompt response to inquiries	10	66.6%	5	33.3%	.	.	.	.	15	100.0%
Knowledgeability of staff	12	66.6%	6	33.3%	.	.	.	.	18	100.0%
Assistance in addressing problems	8	53.3%	6	40.0%	1	6.6%	.	.	15	100.0%
Overall quality	9	45.0%	10	50.0%	1	5.0%	.	.	20	100.0%

The Academic Services Office received thirteen open-ended comments. Most comments about the Academic Services Office are positive, based on reading the emails forwarded to students. GSAOs are unclear about how many students from their departments actually participate in workshops/groups offered.

Suggestions:

- Create a course for international students on American academic writing--*A draft proposal for such a course is being developed and will be submitted to the Committee on Courses (COCI) during the 2010/2011 academic year.*
- Work with departments to offer targeted seminars for their students— *The Director of Academic Services is happy to work with departments to offer targeted seminars for their students. Departments interested in such programs should contact the Director of Academic Services.*

Graduate Dean’s Office

The Office of the Graduate Dean handles academic appeals, student grievances, requests for exceptions to policy, and produces regular statistical reports on students as well as ad hoc reports for graduate programs on campus. The Dean's office also conducts monthly campus-wide meetings for GSAOs.

Table 11. Ratings of services provided by the Office of the Graduate Dean

	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		All	
Handling of requests for exceptions to policy (e.g. admission, fellowship or degree)	41	61.1%	20	29.8%	4	5.9%	2	2.9%	67	100.0%
Academic appeals	26	59.0%	13	29.5%	4	9.0%	1	2.2%	44	100.0%
Student grievances	14	56.0%	8	32.0%	3	12.0%	.	.	25	100.0%
Regular data reports	15	39.4%	16	42.1%	7	18.4%	.	.	38	100.0%
Ad hoc requests for data on graduate students	17	53.1%	10	31.2%	5	15.6%	.	.	32	100.0%
GSAO montly meetings	36	58.0%	22	35.4%	3	4.8%	1	1.6%	62	100.0%
<i>Overall quality</i>	33	52.3%	27	42.8%	3	4.7%	.	.	63	100.0%

Comments were generally positive about the Office of the Graduate Dean. Noteworthy issues singled out for praise included the GSAO monthly meetings, the skillful handling of sensitive situations involving students, and the availability of the Dean for meetings.

Criticism was primarily in two areas, exceptions and data reports. Respondents indicated that the exception process was slow and almost always resulted in granting an exception. The process of writing a memo to request the exception was considered obsolete (compared to online methods) along with the onerous structure of rules that required and exception in the first place.

The Dean’s Office is working with Graduate Services and Communications to radically streamline the Guide to Graduate Policy and associated procedures. We are also working with Graduate Council to eliminate rules that are no longer relevant.

Respondents reported that they did not know the range of data reports that are available because the reports are sent to chairs, not GSAOs. Better communication regarding survey administration and content was recommended along with greater distribution of results.

We will recommend that GSAOs request access to these reports from their Chairs, and encourage Chairs to provide that access.