

Senior Exit Requirement Results from the Graduation Survey - Spring 2003

The Two thousand six undergraduates who filed a petition to graduate in Spring 2003 were surveyed about a variety of topics including the senior exit requirement/capstone experience. Six-hundred-ninety, or 34% responded.

As the table below indicates, there was considerable variability in the means by which students satisfied the exit requirement. Among survey respondents 38% took a departmental exam and another 2% took a national exam such as the GRE, 16% took a capstone course in their department, 13% wrote a senior thesis, and an additional 11% wrote an in-depth paper.

1) How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?

<i>N</i>	639
Research project and thesis	13%
In-depth written paper	11%
A departmental exit exam	38%
A national exam, such as GRE	2%
Capstone course	16%
Other	20%

While there was some variability within departments there was even greater variability between departments in how students satisfied the exit requirement.

Primary major * How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement? Crosstabulation

	How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?						Total
	Research project and thesis	In-depth written paper	A departmental exit exam	A national exam, such as GRE	Capstone course	Other	
American Studies	4 25.0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	11 68.8%	1 6.3%	16 100.0%
Anthropology	5 16.1%	5 16.1%	1 3.2%	0 .0%	8 25.8%	12 38.7%	31 100.0%
Art	1 4.2%	0 .0%	2 8.3%	0 .0%	4 16.7%	17 70.8%	24 100.0%
Art History	1 20.0%	3 60.0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 20.0%	0 .0%	5 100.0%
Biochemistry	5 83.3%	0 .0%	0 .0%	1 16.7%	0 .0%	0 .0%	6 100.0%
Biology	1 14.3%	0 .0%	4 57.1%	1 14.3%	0 .0%	1 14.3%	7 100.0%
Business Management Economics	0 .0%	2 3.2%	42 67.7%	0 .0%	2 3.2%	16 25.8%	62 100.0%
Chemistry	2 100.0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	0 .0%	2 100.0%
Community Studies	10 100.0%	1 10.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	11 100.0%

	90.9%	9.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Computer Engineering	2	0	4	0	7	3	16
Computer Science	12.5%	.0%	25.0%	.0%	43.8%	18.8%	100.0%
	2	0	34	4	0	0	40
Earth Sciences	5.0%	.0%	85.0%	10.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	2	0	0	0	0	1	3
Ecology and Evolution	66.7%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	100.0%
	0	0	3	0	0	0	3
Economics	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	0	0	9	0	0	3	12
Electrical Engineering	.0%	.0%	75.0%	.0%	.0%	25.0%	100.0%
	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Environmental Studies	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	2	4	0	0	12	5	23
Film and Digital Media	8.7%	17.4%	.0%	.0%	52.2%	21.7%	100.0%
	3	5	4	0	4	15	31
Film and Video	9.7%	16.1%	12.9%	.0%	12.9%	48.4%	100.0%
	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Global Economics	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
	3	0	3	0	0	0	6
History	50.0%	.0%	50.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	1	14	0	0	5	4	24
Individual Studies	4.2%	58.3%	.0%	.0%	20.8%	16.7%	100.0%
	2	0	0	0	0	2	4
Information Systems Management	50.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	2	6	0	0	7	2	17
Language Studies	11.8%	35.3%	.0%	.0%	41.2%	11.8%	100.0%
	1	0	2	0	0	0	3
Latin American and Latino Studies	33.3%	.0%	66.7%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Legal Studies	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	3	0	0	0	6	0	9
Linguistics	33.3%	.0%	.0%	.0%	66.7%	.0%	100.0%
	1	0	10	0	0	0	11
Literature	9.1%	.0%	90.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
	6	11	1	0	15	17	50
Marine Biology	12.0%	22.0%	2.0%	.0%	30.0%	34.0%	100.0%
	6	0	12	1	0	1	20
Mathematics	30.0%	.0%	60.0%	5.0%	.0%	5.0%	100.0%
	4	4	1	0	1	4	14
Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology	28.6%	28.6%	7.1%	.0%	7.1%	28.6%	100.0%
	3	0	8	2	0	0	13
	23.1%	.0%	61.5%	15.4%	.0%	.0%	100.0%

Music	0	0	5	0	0	2	7
	.0%	.0%	71.4%	.0%	.0%	28.6%	100.0%
Philosophy	0	1	0	0	6	2	9
	.0%	11.1%	.0%	.0%	66.7%	22.2%	100.0%
Physics	5	0	0	0	0	1	6
	83.3%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	16.7%	100.0%
Politics	2	10	0	0	5	3	20
	10.0%	50.0%	.0%	.0%	25.0%	15.0%	100.0%
Psychobiology	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Psychology	0	0	78	4	1	0	83
	.0%	.0%	94.0%	4.8%	1.2%	.0%	100.0%
Sociology	1	1	13	0	1	12	28
	3.6%	3.6%	46.4%	.0%	3.6%	42.9%	100.0%
Theater Arts	1	0	1	0	1	4	7
	14.3%	.0%	14.3%	.0%	14.3%	57.1%	100.0%
Women's Studies	1	2	0	0	1	1	5
	20.0%	40.0%	.0%	.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total	82	71	241	13	101	129	637
	12.9%	11.1%	37.8%	2.0%	15.9%	20.3%	100.0%

Students' evaluations of their experiences with the exit requirement ranged from "it was a useless hoop to jump through" to "it was one of the most important aspects of my academic career."

2) How would you rate your senior exit requirement? The senior exit requirement...

<i>N</i>	637
Was a useless hoop to jump through.	20%
Was less valuable than my regular coursework	10%
Had about the same impact as my regular coursework.	30%
Was important in developing my intellectual skills	20%
Was one of the most important aspects of my academic career.	20%
Mean	3.11
Standard Deviation	1.37

However, as the following table illustrates, students' evaluations of their experiences varied dramatically based on how they satisfied the requirement. Forty-three percent of those who conducted a senior thesis rated the experience as one of the most valuable of their academic careers and an additional 34% thought it was important in developing their intellectual skills. On the other hand, 42% of those who took a departmental exam thought it was a useless hoop to jump through while only 5% thought it was one of the most important experiences of their academic careers.

How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement? * How would you rate your senior exit requirement?The senior exit requirement ... Crosstabulation

			How would you rate your senior exit requirement?The senior exit requirement					Total
			was a useless hoop to jump through	was less valuable than my regular coursework	had about the same impact as my regular coursework	was important in developing my intellectual skills	was one of the most important of my academic career	
How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?	Research project and thesis	Count % within How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?	4 4.9%	1 1.2%	14 17.1%	28 34.1%	35 42.7%	82 100.0%
	In-depth written paper	Count % within How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?	3 4.2%	4 5.6%	24 33.3%	20 27.8%	21 29.2%	72 100.0%
	A departmental exit exam	Count % within How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?	102 42.1%	45 18.6%	65 26.9%	19 7.9%	11 4.5%	242 100.0%
	A national exam, such as GRE	Count % within How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?	4 30.8%	2 15.4%	6 46.2%		1 7.7%	13 100.0%
	Capstone course	Count % within How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?	4 4.0%	4 4.0%	35 34.7%	28 27.7%	30 29.7%	101 100.0%
	Other	Count % within How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?	10 7.9%	5 3.9%	49 38.6%	34 26.8%	29 22.8%	127 100.0%
	Total	Count % within How did you satisfy your senior exit requirement?	127 19.9%	61 9.6%	193 30.3%	129 20.3%	127 19.9%	637 100.0%