

# Report of the Results of the BGSU Graduating Senior Questionnaire, 2005

## CONTENT:

Abstract . . . . .	1
Background and Methodology . . . . .	1
Results:	
Academic, Social, and Financial Information . . . . .	3
Enrollment Information . . . . .	5
Perceptions of the Institution . . . . .	7
Educational and Personal Gains . . . . .	8
Satisfaction with BGSU . . . . .	9
Emphasis . . . . .	10
Further Education Plans . . . . .	11
Comments and Suggestions . . . . .	11
Summary and Conclusions . . . . .	13

## ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of the Summer 2004, Fall 2004, and Spring 2005 administrations of the BGSU Graduating Senior Questionnaire (BGSQ). The BGSQ is designed to collect data on graduating seniors' academic and social experiences at BGSU, their perceptions of the institution, their educational and personal gains, and their satisfaction with the programs and services provided by the University. Additional information such as graduates' college expenses, years of enrollment at BGSU, and their further education plans are also collected. The results of this report may be used to evaluate and improve the quality of BGSU's undergraduate education as well as the social and academic environment of the institution.

## BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The need for information about graduating seniors' academic and social experiences at BGSU, their perceptions of the institution, educational and personal gains, satisfaction with programs and services, and their further education plans, prompted the development of the BGSU Graduating Senior Questionnaire (BGSQ) in Spring 2000. The literature on college student learning, development, and persistence clearly shows that these traits play a crucial role in student outcomes. Since no single commercially-available questionnaire would provide the data specifically needed by BGSU in a timely and cost effective manner, the BGSQ was developed by the Office of Institutional Research and reviewed by a wide audience. It has been used to collect graduating senior's data ever since.

All seniors who registered for 2004-2005 graduation were asked to fill out the BGSQ on-line before they left BGSU, and 1418 of them completed the survey, resulting in a 48% (1418/2959) response rate. This rate is higher than the one in 2003-2004 (37%) and in 2002-2003 (21%).

Among the total 1418 survey respondents, 1283 of them provided their PID number, which allow us to compare their demographic characteristics with all 2004-2005 graduating seniors. As shown on the table below there was a high degree of race and college similarity between the respondents and the population. The largest difference was the under-representation of students who graduated from BGSU in more than 4 years. Sixty percent of the participants reported that they graduated from BGSU in four or fewer years. This rate is much higher than the average Baccalaureate degree four-year graduation rate at BGSU, which was 34.5% for 2000-2004, 33.4% for 1999-2003, and 30.0% for 1998-2002. The proportion of women respondents (64%) was also higher than in the population (59%). These limitations and the low response rate require that all results from this survey be interpreted with some caution.

	Survey Respondents	2004-05 Graduating Seniors
<b>Gender:</b>		
Female	64%	59%
Male	36%	41%
<b>Race:</b>		
Minorities	7%	8%
European-American	89%	89%
Other/Unknown	4%	3%
<b>College:</b>		
Arts and Sciences	37%	35%
Business Administration	17%	15%
Education and Human Development	31%	32%
Health and Human Services	7%	8%
Musical Arts	2%	2%
Technology	6%	8%

BGSQ results were analyzed by noting the percentages of participants who provided various responses to each questionnaire item. Percentages may not always sum to 100 due to rounding. The following pages highlight these results. In addition, group differences in 2004-2005 (female vs. male, minority graduates vs. European-American graduates, and college vs. college) were investigated and significant differences are noted where they occurred.

## ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### During your enrollment at BGSU, about how many years did you ...

	1 Year or more	None
live in a campus residence hall or house	79%	21%
live in an apartment or house near campus	81%	19%
live at least 5 miles away from BGSU & commute	31%	69%

The majority of the 2004-2005 survey respondents indicated that they were living on campus or near campus during their college years. Male students were more likely than female students to spend three or more years living in an apartment or house near campus. While minority students were more likely than European-American students to spend more years living on campus, European-American students were more likely to spend more years living off campus. Among the students in the six colleges, Musical Arts students were most likely to live in a campus residence hall or house for three or more years. Students in College of Technology and College of Health and Human Services were more likely than the students in other colleges to live at least five miles away from BGSU and commute.

### How many times have you changed your major?

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
None	50%	54%	53%
1	34%	33%	33%
2	8%	8%	9%
3 or more	8%	5%	6%

Near half of the 2004-2005 survey respondents changed their major at least once during their BGSU years. Musical Arts graduates were least likely to change their major among the graduates in the six colleges.

### While enrolled at BGSU, did you ever ... (Percent Responding "Yes")

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
	%	%	%
work at a job off campus	72	75	72
participate in volunteer/service work	65	65	66
participate in an internship or co-op	55	53	55
work at a job on campus	56	53	53
participate in a social club, fraternity, or sorority	54	50	49
serve as an officer in a social club, fraternity/sorority	34	31	32
participate in a professional or student govern. organization	23	21	20
participate in varsity/intercollegiate athletics	15	12	15

Like the graduates in previous years, most of the 2004-2005 graduates worked at a job either on or off campus while they studied at BGSU. They were more likely to be involved with

volunteer/service work, an internship or co-op, and a social club/fraternity/sorority than to participate in varsity/intercollegiate athletics and in a professional or student government organization.

Female graduates were more likely than male graduates to report that they have participated in volunteer/service work. Minority graduates were more likely than European-American graduates to say they have participated in a professional or student government organization as well as served as an officer in a social club, fraternity or sorority.

Among the graduates in the six colleges, Business Administration graduates were most likely to say that they have participated in a professional or student government organization. Graduates in College of Health and Human Services and College of Technology were less likely than the graduates in other colleges to point out that they have worked at a job on campus. While Technology graduates were most likely to indicate that they have participated in an internship or co-op, they were least likely claim that they have participated in volunteer or service work.

**On average, per year, how much of your educational expenses did you cover from each of the sources listed below? (Percent \$1,500 and Over)**

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
	%	%	%
Parents, relatives, friends	57	59	53
Other college loan	30	32	34
Ford Direct Loan	22	25	26
Savings from summer work	25	26	25
Other college grants/scholarships	26	24	23
Off campus jobs	19	17	18
Other loan	11	11	15
Perkins Loan	14	13	15
Other savings	12	14	14
Pell Grant	11	10	13
On campus jobs	8	7	8
Ohio Instructional Grant	7	5	7
Other than listed	6	6	6
Other private grant	4	2	5

Family, other college loans, the Ford Direct Loan, savings from summer work and other college grants/scholarships were the sources of financial support most often cited by BGSU graduates.

Compared with male respondents, female respondents were more likely to get financial support from other college grants and scholarships, but less likely to get over \$3000 support either from savings from summer work or from off campus jobs. Compared with European-American respondents, minority respondents were less likely to receive \$3000 or more from their parents, friends or relatives for their college education. Instead they were more likely to get their financial support from Perkins Loan, Pell Grant, Ohio instructional Grant, other college grants

and scholarships, and on campus jobs than were European-American respondents. Among the respondents in the six colleges, Technology respondents were most likely to earn \$3000 or more from their off campus job to cover their educational expenses.

**How much will you owe in student loans when you graduate?**

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Nothing	36%	33%	31%
Less than \$5,000	7%	4%	5%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	8%	10%	8%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	15%	13%	13%
\$15,000 - \$19,999	16%	15%	14%
\$20,000 or more	18%	26%	30%

Nearly seventy percent of the respondents owe some amount of student loans by the time they graduated from BGSU.

**ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

**How many years will you have been enrolled at BGSU by the time you graduate?**

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
less than four	22%	24%	19%
four	34%	37%	41%
between four and five	35%	31%	31%
more than five	9%	8%	8%

**If it has taken you more than four years to graduate, please indicate whether the following were reasons for extending your enrollment. (Percent Responding "Major" Reason)**

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
	%	%	%
I changed majors	33	34	34
I worked while enrolled	24	22	23
The classes that I needed were not offered when I needed to take them	19	25	19
I transferred to BGSU and needed different courses	18	22	17
My major takes more than four years to complete	14	20	17
I was involved in coop/internships	17	15	17
I was undecided about a major when I started	11	15	17
I received poor academic advising	14	16	16
I had family responsibilities while enrolled	9	11	12
I dropped one or more classes because I was dissatisfied with the	12	10	11

quality of instruction			
I chose not to enroll for one or more semesters	10	12	10
I commuted while enrolled	7	8	9
I had a double major	8	8	8
I had financial problems	6	8	8
I had problems with the academic requirements for my major	9	8	7
I attended part-time	10	8	7
I took classes unrelated to my major due to personal interest	5	6	6
I wanted to maintain or improve my grades	7	6	6
I wanted to have some free time	5	4	3
I did not spend enough time studying	4	3	3
I had to take developmental classes	2	2	2

Like the respondents in previous years, more than half of the respondents in 2004-2005 reported that they graduated from BGSU in four or fewer than four years. This rate is much higher than the average baccalaureate degree four-year graduation rate at BGSU, which is 33.4% for 1999-2003 and 34.5% for 2000-2004. "I changed majors" remains the major reason that was most often cited by 2004-2005 graduates who took more than four years to graduate, followed by "I worked while enrolled" and "the classes that I needed were not offered when I needed to take them" (see the table above).

Females were more likely than males to report that they graduated from BGSU in four years or fewer. They were also more likely than males to cite "I had family responsibilities while enrolled" as the reason for them to take more than four years to graduate. Males, on the other hand, were more likely than their counterpart to cite "I was involved in coop/internships", "I dropped one or more classes because I was dissatisfied with the quality of instruction", and "I wanted to have some free time" as the reasons for them to take more than four years to graduate.

Compared to European-American respondents, minority respondents were more likely to indicate that "I chose not to enroll for one or more semesters", "I transferred to BGSU and needed different courses", "I had financial problems", and "I wanted to maintain or improve my grades" were the major causes for their extended undergraduate education.

Among the students in the six colleges, Technology students were least likely to report that they earned their bachelor's degree in four years or fewer, and they were mostly likely to cite "I was involved in coop/internships" as the major reason for their extended undergraduate education. "My major takes more than four years to complete" was another reason for Technology students as well as students in the College of Musical Arts to take longer time to graduate.

Other factors that were more often reported by students in one college than the others as an important reason to extend they college education were: "I had a double major" (for Business Administrations students); "I took classes unrelated to my major due to personal interest", "I had financial problems", "I did not spend enough time studying"(for students in College of Arts and Sciences and College of Musical Arts); "I dropped one or more classes because I was dissatisfied

with the quality of instruction" (for students in College of Arts and Sciences and College of Business Administration); and "I wanted to have some free time" (for students in College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business Administration, and College of Musical Arts).

## PERCEPTIONS OF THE INSTITUTION

**Looking back at your overall experience at BGSU, to what extent would you agree with the following? (Percent Responding "Agree" or "Strongly Agree")**

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
	%	%	%
I have participated in class discussions	97	97	97
Most faculty at BGSU are friendly and helpful	95	96	97
I have developed close personal relationships with oth. students at BGSU	96	94	94
I have met with a faculty member outside of class to talk about questions/concerns over my class work.	95	94	94
Most other students at BGSU are friendly and helpful	92	92	93
Most faculty and staff at BGSU seem generally interested in students	86	88	90
Most offices and staff at BGSU are friendly and helpful	86	89	90
I have talked about my career plans with a BGSU faculty or staff member	87	86	88
Most faculty at BGSU are good teachers	83	87	87
It has been easy for me to get to know other students	88	87	87
I am able to get into the courses required for my degree program	NA	NA	87
I have developed a close personal relationship with at least one faculty or staff member at BGSU	76	75	77
The information that I received from my adviser was accurate	NA	NA	76
Most of my classes at BGSU seem relevant and applicable to my future	72	75	76
I have participated in study groups	77	74	76
Most students at BGSU have values similar to my own	71	72	74
I have become involved with activities on campus	68	66	68
My adviser showed concern for my academic needs	NA	NA	66
I have become involved with student organizations	62	58	60
My adviser helped me explore and clarify my educational goals	NA	NA	59
I have attended cultural events on campus	60	55	58
I have talked about personal problems with a faculty or staff member	46	49	50

The majority of the survey respondents over the past three years agreed or strongly agreed with most of the items listed above. Females and minority graduates were more likely than males and European-American graduates to attend cultural events on campus and be involved with student organizations. Minority graduates were also more likely than European-American graduates to participate in activities other than cultural events on campus.

Musical Arts graduates tended to be most actively involved with campus cultural events among the graduates in the six colleges. They were also most likely to agree that they have talked about their personal problems with a BGSU faculty or staff member. They, however, were least likely to say that most students at BGSU had values similar to their own and most offices and staff at BGSU were friendly and helpful. Business Administration graduates were least like to feel that they have developed a close personal relationship with at least one faculty of staff member at BGSU. While graduates in College of Arts and Sciences as well as College of Health and Human Services were more likely to claim that their advisers have helped them exploring and clarifying their educational goals, graduates in College of Education and Human Development as well as College of Technology were less likely to agree that the information that they received from their advisors was accurate.

## EDUCATIONAL AND PERSONAL GAINS

**For each of the following items, please indicate how much you feel you have gained as a result of your BGSU education? (Percent Responding "Very Much" or "Quite a Bit")**

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
	%	%	%
being open to new ideas	77	75	77
making connections between the classes I have taken	74	72	76
developing knowledge and skills applicable to a career	73	75	75
understanding my own abilities, interests, and values	74	73	75
making informed judgments	72	72	75
thinking critically	71	73	74
making connections between things I have learned in class and other experiences in my life	71	72	73
relating to others	71	70	72
developing a better understanding of my career goals	67	72	70
writing effectively	69	68	70
speaking effectively	67	67	67
using computers	67	64	65
solving problems	62	63	65
being prepared for further education	59	61	60
understanding cultural, racial, and gender differences and how they relate to me, my field of study, and my future career	54	60	58

About 60% or more of the respondents reported that they made gains towards various educational and personal goals as a result of their BGSU education (see table above). Female respondents were more likely than male respondents to report that they gained quite a bit or very much in making connection between the classes they have taken as well as between things they have learned in class and other experiences in their life. Among the respondents in six colleges, Technology students were most likely to feel that they learned a lot using computers. Musical Arts students were least likely to say they gained a lot in speaking effectively. Respondents in

the College of Education and Human Development and College of Health and Human Services were more likely than the respondents in the other four colleges to indicate that they gained a lot in developing a better understanding of their career goals, obtaining knowledge and skills applicable to a career, being prepared for further education, making connections between things they have learned in class and other experiences in their life, and understanding cultural, racial, and gender differences and how they relate to them, their field of study, and their future career.

## SATISFACTION WITH BGSU

**Looking back at your overall experience at BGSU, how satisfied were you with ... (Percent Responding "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied")**

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
library resources	94	96	96
class size	93	94	95
BGSU overall	92	93	95
the overall quality of instruction	93	94	94
ease of access to instructors	92	94	94
feedback on assignments	87	89	90
computer resources	85	87	89
places to study	87	88	88
residence halls	87	86	83
racial and ethnic diversity	77	84	83
the condition of buildings	83	84	80
financial aid	76	79	79
career services	75	79	79
concern for me as an individual	71	71	75
campus dining services	73	70	73
helpfulness in preparing for further education	68	68	70
the availability of classes at times I needed them	60	62	65
the overall quality of academic advising	60	64	64
helpfulness in preparing for employment	60	62	63
service to commuters	59	56	58

The majority of BGSU graduates were satisfied or very satisfied with all of the aspects of their educational and social experiences listed in the questionnaire.

Female graduates and European American graduates were more satisfied with campus dining services than were male graduates and minority graduates. European-American graduates were also more satisfied with racial and ethnic diversity of BGSU than were minority graduates.

Among the graduates in the six colleges, Health and Human Services graduates were most satisfied with the overall quality of academic advising. Technology graduates were least satisfied

with career services. Arts and Sciences graduates were least satisfied with racial and ethnic diversity of BGSU. Technology as well as Arts and Sciences graduates were also less satisfied with helpfulness in preparing them for employment.

## EMPHASIS

For each of the following items, please indicate how much emphasis you feel BGSU should place in each area?

About the Right Emphasis				Need to Emphasize More		
2002-03	2003-04	2004-05		2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
%	%	%		%	%	%
49	56	60		developing knowledge and skills applicable to a career	51	44
57	62	60	speaking effectively	42	37	39
55	59	61	making connections between the classes I have taken	44	40	38
58	61	62	making connections between things I have learned in class and other experiences in my life	41	38	37
53	58	64	developing a better understanding of my career goals	47	41	36
54	57	63	being prepared for further education	46	42	36
59	64	65	writing effectively	39	34	34
62	68	68	thinking critically	36	30	31
59	66	67	using computers	39	32	30
64	70	71	making informed judgements	35	29	29
62	71	71	being open to new ideas	36	27	27
56	65	67	understanding cultural/racial/gender differences and how they relate to me, my field of study, and my future career	34	26	26
70	75	75	solving problems	30	25	24
74	76	78	understanding my own abilities, interests, and values	24	22	21
74	78	79	relating to others	24	20	19

Sixty percent or more of the 2004-2005 respondents felt that BGSU had given the right emphasis to all the areas listed on the table above. Continual improvements were seen in the areas of helping students to develop knowledge and skills applicable to a career, to develop a better understanding of their career goals, and to prepare them for their further education during the past three years.

Males were more likely than females to report that BGSU should more heavily emphasize solving problems, thinking critically, making informed judgements, and making connections between the classes they have taken. Minority graduates were more likely than their counterparts to say that BGSU needs to emphasize more solving problems, thinking critically, making informed judgements, being open to new ideas, relating to others, developing knowledge and skills applicable to a career, understanding their own abilities, interests, and values, and

understanding cultural/racial/gender differences and how they relate to them, their field of study, and their future career.

Compared with graduates in the other colleges, Technology and Musical Arts graduates were more likely to cite "solving problems" as the area that BGSU could emphasize more. Graduates in Arts and Sciences, Musical Arts, and Technology were more likely than the graduates in three other colleges to say BGSU should pay more attention to students' career and advanced degree preparation. Musical Arts graduates were most likely to indicate that BGSU should emphasize more speaking effectively, thinking critically, making formed judgements, being open to new ideas, and making the connections between the classes they have taken as well as between things they have learned in class and other experiences in their life among all the graduates in the six colleges.

## FURTHER EDUCATION PLANS

### Which best describes your plans for further education after graduation?

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
plan to earn a Master's or doctoral degree	57%	57%	54%
unsure of future education plans	22%	20%	24%
no plans for further college-level education	12%	14%	14%
plan to earn a medical, law, or other professional degree	5%	5%	5%
plan to complete more courses, but not towards a degree	3%	2%	2%
plan to earn another Bachelor's Degree	2%	1%	1%

Most of the survey respondents planned to earn a higher degree other than a bachelors after they graduated from BGSU. Females and respondents in College of Musical Arts, College of Education and Human Development, and College of Health and Human Development seemed more likely to pursue a Master's degree in the future than did males and respondents in other colleges.

## COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Four hundred and seventy-seven students wrote comments and suggestions on the survey. The results are shown below.

	TOTAL
<b>Good Experience:</b>	
Wonderful time/good experience at BGSU. Thanks, BGSU.	131
good faculties/staff members/advising	45
good academic programs/classes	17
<b>Areas That Need To Be Improved:</b>	

advising	35
classes (subject, quality, usefulness)	33
parking/commuting	25
faculty/staff/TA (quality, did not regularly attend meetings)	19
career services	18
relationship between faculty and students	15
degree or major requirements (too strict, unnecessary)	10
racial/cultural diversity	10
placements in intern/jobs (not many chances)	9
tuition	8
lack of scholarships and financial aid	8
bad experience of BGSU	7
more support for certain academic programs	7
student activities	7
survey (too long, type of questions)	6
Financial Aid Office	5
services, classes for non-traditional students	5
some buildings	5
treatment of transfer students	5
co-op program/office	4
grading methods	4
meal plans/price	4
communication between offices	3
dining service	3
more trainings in computer and writing skills	3
roommate selection	3
services for students with disabilities	2
value for money (return the money)	2
alcohol problems among students	1
Bursar's Office	1
<b>Additional Comments Related to Specific Colleges:</b>	
College of Education and Human Development	6
College of Business Administration	4
College of Technology	2
College of Arts and Sciences	2
College of Musical Arts	2
<b>Other Comments on:</b>	
faculty evaluations	5

tenure system	3
core/school values	1
the way the University spends money	1

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of 2004-2005 BGSU Graduating Senior Questionnaire are similar to those of last year's survey.

The majority of 2004-05 graduating seniors lived on campus or near campus during their college years and most of them worked while they enrolled at BGSU. Besides studying and working, 66% of them participated in volunteer or service work, and over half of them participated in an internship or co-op. Like the graduates in the past two years, more than half of the 2004-2005 responding graduates planed to earn a Master's degree or higher after graduation.

Family, college loans/grants/scholarships, and savings from summer work were the greatest financial sources for BGSU graduates. Nearly 70% of the 2004-05 graduating seniors had some amount of student debt by the time they graduated from BGSU. The percentage of graduates who reported to have debt of \$20,000 or more increased from 18% in 2002-2003 to 26% in 2003-2004 to 30% in 2004-2005.

Forty-seven percent of the graduates who responded to the questionnaire changed their major at least once at BGSU. "I changed my major" (34%) and "I worked while enrolled" (23%) were the most often given reasons for them to take more than four years to graduate.

The 2004-2005 responding graduates had good perceptions of BGSU, and felt that they gained very much or quite a bit on all the items of students' educational and personal development listed in the questionnaire. The vast majority of them agreed that most faculties at BGSU are good teachers, and most staff and students here are friendly and helpful. Seventy percent or more of them claim that they had no problem to get into the courses required for their degree program, that the information they received from their adviser was accurate, and that most of their classes at BGSU seem relevant and applicable to their future. Two out of three survey respondents felt that they have made great progress in being open to new ideas, thinking critically, writing effectively, understanding themselves as well as relating to others, and obtaining knowledge and skills applicable to their future career and personal development.

The majorities of the 2004-2005 graduates were satisfied or very satisfied with their BGSU experiences. The areas that received highest satisfaction rate are library resources (96%), class size (95%), BGSU overall (95%), the overall quality of instruction (94%), ease of access to instructors (94%), feedback on assignments (90%), computer resources (89%), places to study (88%), residence halls (83%), racial and ethnic diversity (83%), and the condition of buildings (80%). "I had a wonderful experience at BGSU" is the comment that was mentioned by the largest number of 2004-2005 responding graduates.

Although improvement were seen in career and future education preparation during the past three years, these are still the areas that 2004-2005 graduating seniors would like BGSU to emphasis more in the future. Other areas that some students expressed their concerns are academic advising, class subject/quality/usefulness, and parking/commuting services.

The major limitations of this study were the low response rate (48%) for the questionnaire and the under-representation of males and respondents who graduated from BGSU in more than four years. These limitations require that the results from this survey be interpreted with some caution.

The Office of Institutional Research welcomes feedback concerning this and other studies and how they can continue to be improved.