

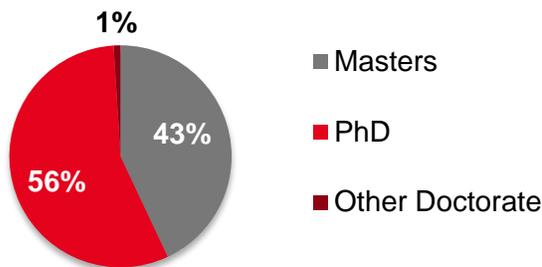
# Graduate Student Life Quality of Life Survey: Summary Report

## Overview

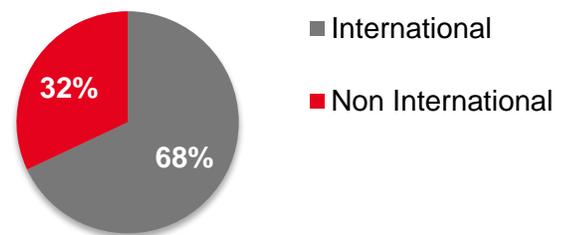
Graduate Student Life (GSL) provides opportunities for University of Maryland graduate students to build community, locate needed resources, as well as advocates for graduate student issues. In spring 2017, a survey was disseminated to all graduate students at the University of Maryland via an open link; 1,712 useable responses were collected. The survey was designed by the 4G Network which is comprised of Graduate Student Life, The Graduate School, The Graduate Student Legal Aid Office, and the Graduate Student Government. For the analyses included below, only those students who indicated they were full-time students are included (n = 1,303).

Additional reports on the results of this survey are being generated and shared with academic units by the Graduate School.

### Educational Objective



### International Student



**When you see asterisks throughout the report, this indicates there is a statistically significant difference between the groups.**

## Findings

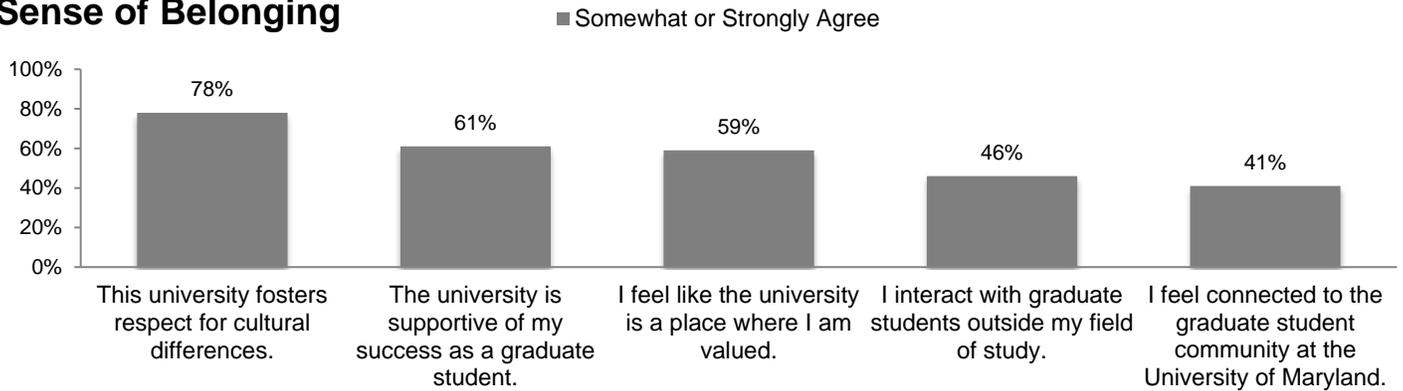
### Resources

Included on the survey were a number of items regarding resources (e.g., figuring out transportation to campus, finding housing, and securing funding); specifically, respondents were asked to consider how important specific resources were prior to beginning coursework. Securing adequate funding (73%), finding housing (72%), locating employment (71%), and figuring out transportation (62%) were those with the highest percentage of students indicating they were *very* or *extremely* important. Across **all** items, international students reported these items were statistically more important than non-international students.

### Sense of Belonging

Responses suggest that there may be opportunities to engage full-time graduate students in cross-program interactions as less than 50% *somewhat* or *strongly agreed* that they interact with graduate students outside their field of study. About 40% indicated they felt connected to the graduate student community, 38% indicated that they *somewhat* or *strongly disagreed* with this statement.

## Sense of Belonging

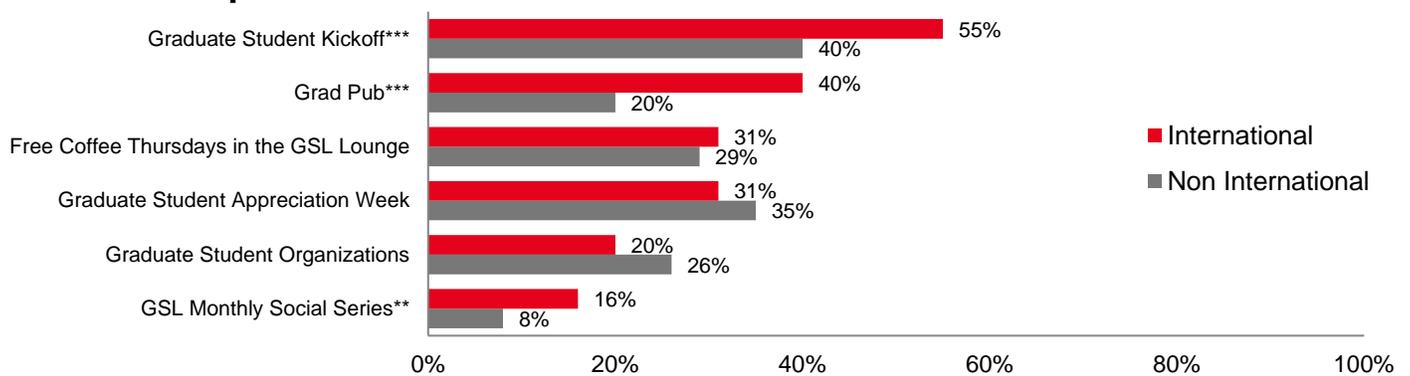


When asked how often they have felt discriminated against when speaking with other graduate students, almost three-quarters (74%) indicated they felt this way *not at all*. Almost two-thirds (64%) indicated they had not had hostile interactions with other graduate students.

## Involvement on Campus

The results of the survey indicate that for some types of events hosted by GSL, international students are more likely to attend than non-international students.

## Event Participation

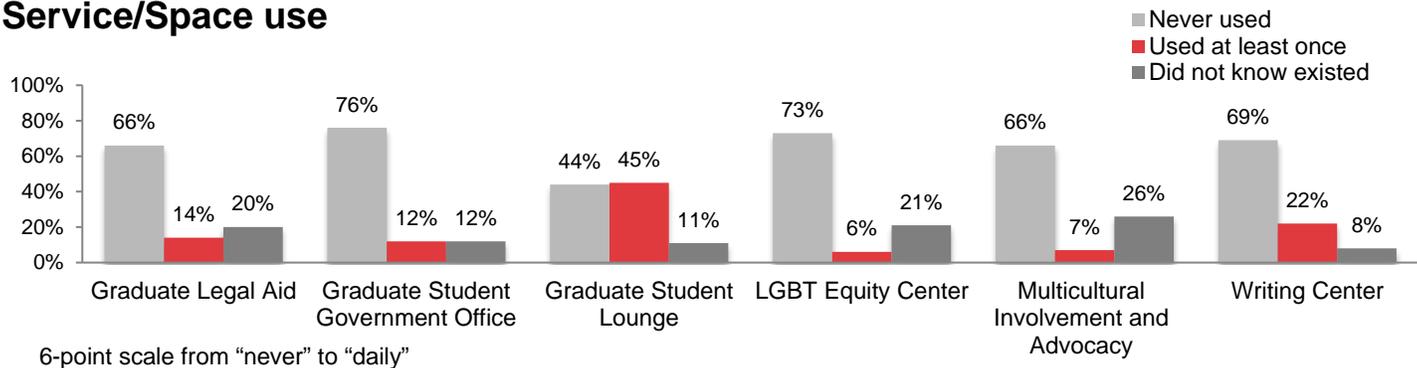


Elsewhere on the survey, respondents were asked how often they participate in student organizations with other graduate students. Only one in four (26%) report participating in these organizations *a lot or a great deal* while almost half (47%) report doing this *not at all or a little*.

Students were asked what types of student organizations they would like to see on campus; 321 responded to this question. The top three categories referenced were: 1) physical student organizations such as yoga, dance, running (38 responses), 2) identity-based student organizations such as an international student organization (37 responses), and 3) a collective bargaining organization or union (32 responses). Student responses could appear in more than one category.

Respondents were also asked about their frequency of engagement in certain types of organizations and with specific spaces on campus.

## Service/Space use



Shown in the graph above, the Graduate Student Lounge is one of the most visited spaces included on the survey. A quarter (26%) of respondents did not know Multicultural Involvement and Community Advocacy (MICA) existed and one of five (21%) respondents did not know the LGBT Equity Center existed.

## Satisfaction

A number of items were included on the survey addressing students' satisfaction. The most highly rated components were finding study space on campus (64% *somewhat* or *extremely satisfied*) and health and wellness on campus (62%). Over 50% were *somewhat* or *extremely satisfied* with communication about services and activities available on campus (57%), finding an assistantship or on-campus employment (55%), and learning assistance or writing support services (54%).

Only 40% of full-time graduate students agreed that they were *somewhat* or *extremely satisfied* with their ability to connect with a community on campus that shares a common social identity with themselves.

## Changes and Recommendations

Based on the data presented above, there are some opportunities to improve programming and resource education efforts, some of which are underway.

- Graduate Student Life may consider collaborating with International Students & Scholar Services (ISSS) to provide additional outreach over the summer to incoming students. GSL has requested to take part in the ISSS orientation in an effort to address this need.
- One of the popular requests for new types of student organizations were physical/active organizations. In response, this fall Graduate Student Life added a hiking trip to their calendar of events. Over 50 students were waitlisted for this event. Given the demand, similar new programs are being considered.
- GSL will work to increase the visibility of programs and resources through greater outreach during department orientations. Staff attended the Graduate School Orientation, 4 resource fairs during departmental orientations, gave 7 presentations during new student orientations, and sent flyers to 14 different departments to include in their welcome packets. Through these efforts, approximately 2,600 new graduate students have been provided information about GSL resources and programs.
- Graduate Student Life may want to explore developing a deeper collaboration with MICA and the LGBT Equity Center as a high percentage of respondents were unaware of these resources. GSL launched a GradTerp Traditions book this fall as a new way to highlight resources, spaces, and campus traditions. The LGBT Equity Center, MICA, The Memorial Chapel, and other on-campus units are highlighted.
- The weekly Thursday Newsletter to Graduate Students has been expanded to highlight employment and funding opportunities, student organizations, campus workshops, and other university events.
- During the 10th Annual Graduate Student Kickoff this fall, GSL expanded their resource fair to include Graduate Student Organizations in addition to traditional on-campus resources and sponsors.
- The partnership between the 4G members continues to solidify. Regularly scheduled communications meetings are held to share information across units and increase cross-promotion of events.