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A STUDY OF THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT GRADUATE STUDENTS'  
ACADEMIC PROGRESS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL  
ADMINISTRATION AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

*Michigan State University*

PH.D. 1985

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A STUDY OF THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT  
GRADUATE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PROGRESS IN  
THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AT  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

By

Pauline Olive Peart

A DISSERTATION

submitted to  
Michigan State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Educational Administration

1985

## ABSTRACT

### A STUDY OF THE FACTORS THAT AFFECT GRADUATE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PROGRESS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

by

Pauline Olive Peart

Graduate students' satisfaction, persistence, and academic progress in graduate school is dependent on personal characteristics of graduate students and the factors they face in the graduate school environment. Factors that affected graduate (doctoral) students' academic progress in the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University was the focus of this investigation. The period under study was four years, beginning in the 1980-81 academic year, using doctoral students who were admitted to and subsequently enrolled in the department that year as the research population.

A survey questionnaire was sent to 76 doctoral students who were admitted and then enrolled that year, to determine their academic progress, their background data (demographics), and factors that affected their rate of progress and satisfaction with the graduate program environment. Cross-tabulations, frequency, means, and percentages were used to determine if there were a relationship between graduate students' rate of academic progress and graduate program environment and such socio-demographic variables as ethnicity, nationality, gender, marital status, age, and financial status.



Pauline Olive Peart

Rate of academic progress was not found to be associated with the students' socio-demographic variables. However, a relationship was established between ethnicity, gender, and marital status and some aspects of the program environment, particularly students' interaction with other students, and faculty. Program area and nationality were shown to be related to students' perceptions of stress and self-esteem.

A strong positive relationship was found when the students' satisfaction with the graduate education program environment variables was tested against their academic progress. Program environment variables included financial aid, student/student and faculty/student relationships, and the presence of stress, self-esteem, and support mechanisms.

The results showed that students' rate of academic progress was, in the main, influenced by the program environment, while certain socio-demographic characteristics had an impact on some features of the graduate environment.

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late mother, Nora, in appreciation of her love and nurturing that made me what I am, and to my father for making me appreciate the value of education.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction

The graduate school environment is one of the factors contributing to graduate students' rate of academic progress and retention in graduate school. Historically, however, research dealing with the graduate population has been limited. Gregg (1971) focuses on the relative scarcity of research on graduate education, as does Winston (1976), who says, "Even though the vast majority of research concerning the American college campus is done by graduate faculty and their students, the graduate education process and its students have been almost completely ignored as a subject for research" (p. 43). But Winston also notes that this situation is changing, since more research is now focused on graduate students, the graduate environment, and the graduate education process. Increased attention is given to (a) the various aspects of the graduate environment, (b) the graduate education process, and (c) graduate student satisfaction. This should provide more understanding of the overall graduate process as it is experienced by students.

Graduate students' academic progress is the sum of the steps they accomplish in fulfilling the educational and administrative requirements necessary for being granted a Ph.D. degree. Academic progress is facilitated by the environmental support students receive from institutional administrators and faculty members in graduate school.

A student's retention in graduate school is not an indication that the student is making satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion.

Retention is merely an indication of the extent to which graduate students stay on at a university. So long as students are not involuntarily separated from graduate institutions, they may be retained indefinitely if they are able to afford the cost of tuition.

While in graduate school, students encounter so many obstacles in completing their degrees that Bellis (1975) sees graduate education in terms of its restrictions. Topp (1977) associates graduate study with neuroticism, while Seidman (1977) associates it with frustration and alienation in students. According to Heiss (1970), most graduate schools foster stress-filled environments where the priority is seldom related to learning. She finds that the pressures that students must endure to achieve a graduate degree are often dehumanizing. Heiss also indicates, however, that this negative atmosphere is changing because faculty and other university officials are taking steps to relieve some of the stress of graduate education.

Despite the negative associations attached to graduate education, students are still enrolling in graduate schools because they believe positive benefits will result; and many of them are remaining until degree completion because they find their programs and the school environment satisfying. In studies conducted by Astin (1968), Pervin (1967), and Richardson (1969), it was established that the better the "fit" between students and their educational environment, the more satisfied they will be. Lewis (1969) also found that congruence between students' ideal expectations and their actual college experience is positively related to college choice satisfaction. This and other literature shows that the more satisfied students are with the college environment, the greater will be their chances of making satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion.

An institution's objective for retaining students may be different from those of the students. Over the last two years, the Journal of Higher Education,

the Chronicle of Higher Education, and other periodicals devoted to higher education have been replete with articles discussing the frustration faced by college and university administrators regarding the retention of students. This frustration reflects the decline of revenue concomitant with the enrollment of fewer students in higher and graduate education.

Delworth and Hanson (1980) indicated that there has been much institutional concern regarding retention in higher education in general and in graduate education in particular. Institutions have many options available to them for dealing with the retention problem, but whether students are being retained indefinitely or are progressing satisfactorily toward degree completion is an important and sometimes controversial issue. The literature in the field highlights some of the concerns of and options available to institutions; it also points out some of the problems students face, such as inadequate financial aid, academic adjustment, environmental adjustment, and difficulties with faculty/student and student/student relationships.

According to Delworth and Hanson (1980), it is in the best interest of institutions to retain students until they graduate, especially in publicly-assisted institutions where state funding is determined by enrollment figures. In such cases, much of the interest attached to retention has focused on predictions of enrollment from term to term and year to year. Delworth and Hanson also suggest that in many institutions, student "stop outs" occur for various reasons and for various periods of time and have become sufficiently common that the prediction of returns of individuals not presently enrolled has become an integral part of enrollment forecasting. If enrollment predictions turn out to be unsatisfactory, an institution has five options available to it:

1. a program to maintain student continuation,
2. motivation for students to return to school,

3. increased effort to recruit additional students,
4. lower admission standards, and
5. asking students what factors or characteristics of an institution contributed to their attraction to it. (Delworth & Hanson, 1980)

Delworth and Hanson also found that retention or persistence is related to past achievement and ability level. The lowering of admission standards to increase or maintain enrollment tends to negate any attempt on the part of an institution to increase student retention. They advocate that institutions work with students currently enrolled until they complete their degrees rather than engaging in a very costly competitive recruiting process which may not be very effective.

According to Delworth and Hanson, there are many factors involved in the problems of academic progress and retention. Although many positive benefits accompany a graduate degree, students find they encounter many problems in the course of the graduate experience. The general view of researchers in the field seems to be that because institutions are in a position to create a positive learning environment for graduate students, it is their responsibility to ensure that students are not only retained in the institution, but that the learning environment is conducive to satisfactory student progress toward degree completion. Anything short of such a supportive learning environment negates efforts of the institution to increase student retention and maintain satisfactory student academic progress.

### The Purpose of the Study

This descriptive study was designed to examine the factors that affect the academic progress and satisfaction of graduate students in the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University (MSU) who admitted

to and subsequently enrolled in doctoral programs during academic year 1980-81.

Thus, the study had three objectives:

1. to determine those students who were making satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion in Educational Administration;
2. to examine the factors that graduate students perceive to be affecting their academic progress in Educational Administration; and
3. to examine the relationship, if any, among graduate students' academic progress, the graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, student/student relationships, and financial status.

#### Need for the Study

Graduate students in the Department of Educational Administration at MSU have a need for information on the factors that affect graduate students' academic progress in Educational Administration at Michigan State University. Students seeking admission will be able to prepare themselves for the demands of the course of study, and those enrolled will be able to evaluate their own academic progress and avoid some of the problems previous students have encountered. Potential students and those in similar programs at other institutions may find such information useful for comparative purposes.

Professors and academic advisors of graduate students in the department need to be aware of the kind of information provided by such research in order to better serve their students. One way in which faculty members may better serve their students is to become aware of the importance of student/faculty relations to students. As will be apparent from the review of the literature, the field of higher education administration is also in need of this kind of research to enhance enrollments, retention, the quality of education provided, and the number of students graduating.

### Significance of the Study

Many institutions are faced with enrollment declines which are augmented by considerable numbers of dropouts every year. According to Gorman (1974), both privately- and publicly-funded institutions are faced with enrollment decline. He attributes declines in higher education enrollment to (a) the gross decline in the student population pool, coupled with (b) massive tuition increases and finds that a formerly unprecedented seller's market in higher education is changing to a buyer's market. This makes it especially important for higher education institutions to retain the students they already have and monitor their academic progress to ensure that they are making satisfactory progress toward completing their degrees. Toward this end, the present research was designed to examine the progress made by the doctoral students admitted to and subsequently enrolled in the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University in academic year 1980-81. The research effort was also intended to investigate characteristics of the students themselves and factors of the environment in which they did their graduate study to determine their impact on academic progress and graduate student retention.

### Research Questions

The following questions guided the study.

1. Is students' rate of academic progress associated with their financial status, program area, gender, marital status, age, race, nationality, and students' perceptions of their graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, and student/student relationships?
2. Is there a relationship among the students' socio-demographic variables (financial status, program area, gender, marital status, age, race, nationality) and their satisfaction with the graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, and student/student relationships?



### Student Academic Progress

In an effort to determine graduate students' academic progress, a list of criteria was developed. According to the Michigan State University Graduate Program Guideline (1983-84), Ph.D. students have no more than eight years after admission to complete the proposal and dissertation, or no more than three years for these final steps after completion of the comprehensive examination. Although University regulations allow eight years from the beginning of the program to completion, or three years after the completion of the comprehensives, whichever comes first, most students complete the degree in three to five years. Therefore, the time frame selected for the study was five years.

A study conducted by Bundy (1968), at the University of California, found that the normative time for degree completion was four to five years, including two years for the dissertation. Therefore, the five year time frame seemed to be a reasonable basis for evaluating graduate students to determine whether they are making satisfactory progress or making little or no progress toward degree completion.

The researcher conducted the research at a point which was four-fifths of the way through the usual five-year period needed for degree completion. This was after four of the five years generally needed to complete the degree. The researcher felt that four years would be sufficient to evaluate graduate students' academic progress. That of the students in the population had already completed their degrees in Educational Administration before the fourth of the five years usually allocated for doctoral study underscored the suitability of the decision to conduct the study at this point.

Accordingly, graduate students who were considered to be making excellent progress toward degree completion were those students who had completed

1. all the coursework,
2. the comprehensive examination,
3. the proposal for dissertation, and
4. the oral defense of the dissertation before or within the specified time limits outlined in the progress report.

Graduate students who were considered to be making good progress toward degree completion were those who had failed to

1. complete the coursework requirements as outlined in the progress report, and/or
2. take or successfully complete the comprehensive examination, and/or
3. failed to complete and gain guidance committee approval for their proposals.

Graduate students who were considered to be making minimum progress toward degree completion were those who had failed to

1. complete coursework requirements as outlined in the progress report but who had been enrolled for a minimum of one quarter, and
2. failed to complete and gain guidance committee approval for their proposals.

Progress is further defined as the administrative steps students must complete in order to fulfill the degree requirements in the form of a progress report.

## Variables that Affect Graduate Students' Academic Progress

### Graduate Education Program

According to Heiss (1970), most graduate schools maintain a stress-filled environment and the pressure is dehumanizing for students. Karelius (1982) found that men and women enrolled in graduate school for similar reasons, often related to career development, and to increase career options and to enhance self-discovery and self-esteem. A review of the literature enabled the researcher to arrive at the indicators that affect graduate students' satisfaction with the graduate education program and graduate environment (Field & Giles, 1980). Indicators of support and satisfaction within the graduate education program and the graduate environment are:

- a very supportive, stress-free environment
- a very supportive learning environment
- a very supportive, self-esteem-building environment

### Faculty/Student Relationships

Interaction between faculty and graduate students may be harmonious or conflicting. According to Duncan (1976), their relations with members of the faculty are regarded by most graduate students as the single most important aspect in determining the quality of their graduate experience. Unfortunately, many also report that this is the single most disappointing aspect of their graduate experience.

Faculty/student relationships will be assessed according to the extent of support and satisfaction graduate students report receiving from faculty members in terms of academic interaction, task/professional interaction, and social interaction. Indicators of satisfactory relationships include:

- a very satisfactory academic interaction with faculty members
- a very satisfactory task/professional interaction with faculty members
- a very satisfactory social interaction with faculty members

#### Student/Student Relationships

Field and Giles (1980) found that the intellectual stimulation of peers was very important to graduate students in terms of their satisfaction with their graduate experience. In addition, Bargar and Mayo-Chamberlain (1983) suggested that graduate students' experiences with each other in coursework and discussions bring about fresh perspectives and insights that are important to the development of the academic community. As a result of such interaction, student/student relationships promote a comradeship between graduate students.

Student/student relationships were assessed according to the extent of satisfaction graduate students report receiving from relationships with other graduate students, in terms of academic, social, and intellectual interaction. Indicators of satisfactory relationships are:

- very satisfactory interaction with peers
- very satisfactory academic interaction with peers
- very satisfactory intellectual interaction with peers
- very satisfactory social interaction with peers

#### Financial Status of Graduate Students

The ability of students to meet financial obligations incurred during the course of graduate study is another variable in this study. Sewell (1971) found that students from a high socioeconomic background have an advantage over students from a low socioeconomic background in completing graduate or professional programs. Winston (1976) says that graduate students'

socioeconomic position is ambiguous, that although graduate students have middle class values, they lack the income for middle class lifestyles.

Whether or not it is directly attributable to socioeconomic status, many graduate students drop out of school because they lack the needed financial support to continue graduate study. Lack of financial support is cited in the literature as one of the most frequent reasons listed for students dropping out of school (Astin, 1972).

In this study, the financial status of students will be assessed according to the extent that students perceive that adequate and satisfactory financial resources or sponsorships are available to meet graduate education financial obligations. Indicators of perceived satisfaction with financial resources are:

- very adequate financial support to defray graduate expenses
- very satisfactory financial sponsorship to defray graduate expenses

#### Definition of Terms

The following are the terms that will be used in this study.

Academic progress: the administrative steps taken by students in fulfilling the educational requirements necessary to be granted a Ph.D. degree. The requirements are stated in terms of academic quarter, credit hours, minimum grade point average, completing comprehensive examinations in major areas of study, and oral defense of the dissertation.

Academic progress report. The first two academic years in the doctoral program were designated as the coursework period. At the end of this time, students should have formed guidance committees and presented their Statements of Educational Goals. Students should also have completed at least 50% of the coursework required to complete their program plans, excluding research credits. Students must have maintained overall grade point averages of

3.0 throughout their graduate study in Educational Administration to be designated as making satisfactory academic progress.

The third year was designated as the comprehensive examination and proposal period. Students should have completed all the coursework, comprehensive examinations, and approval of research proposals in any quarter of the third year.

The fourth year was designated as the research period. During this period in the graduate study process, the student expands the literature review, collects data, analyzes the data, and prepares the first written draft of the dissertation.

The fifth year was designated as the research completion stage. At this juncture in the research process, students complete their research; that is, they are expected to write the final drafts of their dissertations, defend them, make changes or corrections, and be candidates for graduation.

It should be noted that for the purposes of this study, academic progress was defined by the researcher's criteria. Although students may be making satisfactory academic progress based on their own schedules, they may not be making sufficient progress based on the researcher's definition of academic progress.

In addition to the criteria listed in the student academic progress report, a progress scale was developed to be used in conjunction with the progress report. If a graduate student was able to fulfill the criteria outlined in the progress report and fell in the highest column on the progress scale, that student was considered to have made excellent academic progress toward degree completion in the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University.

The progress scale developed for this study was as follows:

Minimum Progress = completed up to 50% of coursework but failed to establish a guidance committee

Good Progress = completed 50% of all coursework, established a guidance committee and/or presented a statement of educational goals within the first two years

Excellent Progress = completed all requirements on or before schedule as outlined in the progress report

The progress report and progress scale were adapted from the MSU 1983-84 policy publication on graduate academic programs.

EAD: the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University.

ACE: the division of Adult and Continuing Education within the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University.

CUA: the division of College and University Administration within the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University.

K-12: the division of K-12 Administration within the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University.

Graduate education program: an organized program of study designed for graduate students. This may also involve research carried out by students under faculty supervision.

Graduate environment: the sum total of facilities, programs, and services provided for graduate students within the university setting. These services include academic, social, and cultural provisions as well as other programs. They establish the conditions within which graduate students function as they progress through the Ph.D. program.

Graduate student: college or university enrollee studying for a post-B.A. degree, e.g., doctorate (for this study, it refers only to doctoral enrollees).

Faculty: the body of persons responsible for instruction and administration in a university.

Retention: the measure of extent to which students stay on at school in quest of further qualifications.

#### Limitations of the Study

The study was limited by an inability to locate all potential subjects in the study population. Lists of students' names and addresses from the Office of Graduate Student Affairs in the College of Education at MSU, the MSU Registrar, College of Education department heads, and individual graduate student advisors were not complete. The study was also limited in that some students who were located did not choose to return the questionnaire, and those who did return questionnaires did not always give all relevant information. To the extent that any subjects did not respond congruently with their actual feelings, the study may be limited in the degree to which it reflects those feelings.

#### Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited by its focus which was limited to selected programs in the College of Education at Michigan State University. These included the programs of (a) Adult and Continuing Education, (b) College and University Administration, and (c) K-12 Administration, offered by the Department of Educational Administration. It was also delimited by the research population which consisted of doctoral students admitted to and subsequently enrolled in the above programs in the academic year 1980-81.



### Organization of the Study

The remainder of the study is organized in four chapters. Chapter II is a report of the review of selected literature. The research design and procedures are detailed in Chapter III. Chapter IV is a presentation and analysis of the data, and Chapter V includes a summary of the findings, the researcher's conclusions, and some recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Enrollment trends reveal a decline in enrollments in graduate programs that is characteristic across the country. In order to maintain graduate enrollments, several institutions have made students' academic progress and retention their cardinal objectives. In pursuance of these objectives, they are implementing intensive recruitment programs designed to attract students of the right caliber into their graduate programs. Despite positive measures taken by institutions to ensure maximum student retention, however, student stop-outs, dropouts, and withdrawals have posed a problem for institutions in the past and will continue to do so. One report indicated that the graduate school environment is a large factor in determining whether students make satisfactory academic progress towards degree completion or whether they fail to do so and leave the program (Astin, 1972).

Astin (1968) and other researchers established that the better the "fit" between individual students and their college environment, the more satisfied the students will be.

However, in reviewing the literature, Schmidt and Sedlacek (1972) found that

Many college students, administrators and faculties have emphasized inadequate communication between the producers (faculty and administration) and consumers (students) of higher education. While explanations have been offered it is likely that some of the inadequate communication can be attributed to the differing vantage points of each group; that is, that students, administrators, and faculty may see the same thing (the university) differently. (p. 234)

The study further concluded that the perception of students and the perceptions of administrators and faculty were indeed different.

The researchers suggest that if faculty and administrators knew more about the expectations of students, they could determine better methods of working to bring the institution in line with students' expectations and ideas.

Another complaint by students about the college environment, found in a study conducted by Ivey and Wilson (1971), was that students see the university as failing to encourage self expression in the form of public discussion and debate. Ivey and Wilson also found that students see the university as failing to encourage the social and career skills which will be necessary for them to function as well adjusted individuals in the community at large.

A limited amount of literature is currently available on graduate students' academic progress and its relationship to the graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, student/student relationships, the financial status of students, and their demographic characteristics. However, an effort has been made to review the relevant studies done in this area.

#### Graduate Education Program

Winston (1976) sees the graduate education program as the vehicle by which students receive the theoretical background necessary to function in the society once they have completed their graduate degrees. This can only be accomplished when the graduate education program is geared to meet the long term goals of students through careful planning of suitable programs for individual students.

According to Tinto (1975), withdrawal behavior is influenced by degree of integration into the social and academic systems of the institution. Anything less than that will deny the student a satisfying graduate educational program experience. Lack of such integration is what Baird (1974) refers to as a

previously one-sided and ambiguous relationship between faculty and students, in which students could not voice their opinions on academic matters, even ones that concerned them, because they were subjected to arbitrary treatment with few options for challenging the academic system.

Since it is the student who is the recipient of education, it is only fair that the student have some input. Karelius (1982) examined "The Early Development and Motivation for Enrollment of Women and Men Who Enrolled in Graduate School During the Age Thirty Transition (Ages 28-32)." Using a population of 37 persons, 19 women and 18 men, she assessed graduate students' life dreams, important life activities, and the relative importance of their careers, relationships with others, and personal development. She found that men and women enrolled in graduate school for similar reasons, most of them related to career development. The majority of the participants had recently been through transitions in their lives and graduate enrollment was seen as a way to consolidate those changes by either increasing career options, enhancing self-discovery, or building self-esteem. She also noted that more men than women perceived graduate school as helpful in making changes in their lives.

DeStigter (1983) compared Ph.D. completers with non-completers in Adult and Continuing Education at Michigan State University and found that there might be a relationship between marriage and degree completion because married students tended to complete their degrees more frequently than single students. There also seemed to be a positive relationship between students' years of work experience in education and adult education and completion of the Adult and Continuing Education doctoral program. DeStigter also found that there was a relationship between the number of times students published with their professors and completion of the degree. Among Adult and Continuing Education degree non-completers, problems with financial aid, establishing a

primary support group with family and colleagues, and effective study habits interfered with completing degree requirements. The study did not differentiate between selected life change events affecting completers and non-completers, but indicated that there were some tangible ways for academic advisors and professors to facilitate students' academic progress through the doctoral program, although certain points appeared to be more troublesome for some students than others.

One way of advancing progress toward degree completion is spelled out in the 1983-84 Michigan State University Graduate Program Guideline. According to program guidelines, once students are accepted into a program of study, they are assigned temporary advisors. When it is time for students to plan their programs of study and form guidance committees, they have the option of requesting the temporary advisor to serve as the major professor or selecting other professors. The student and the major professor together choose the other members of the guidance committee and plan the program of study.

Field and Giles (1980) supported Heiss' (1967) finding in their study identifying the dimensions of graduate students' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with educational programs and experiences in a professional school. They developed a test for relationships between student background characteristics and the dimensions of satisfaction. Eight dimensions of satisfaction were identified, including satisfaction with:

1. intellectual stimulation of instruction,
2. intellectual stimulation of peers,
3. social and work relationships with peers,
4. participation in determining school policies,
5. professor/student interaction,
6. freedom to design graduate program,

7. degree progress, and
8. constraints placed upon students.

The results indicated that students had a highly structured, multidimensional view of satisfaction with graduate education. Further inspection of the nature of the eight satisfaction dimensions revealed three general concerns or themes: (a) freedom and independence, (b) relationships with fellow students and professors, and (c) academic performance. (Field & Giles, 1980, pp. 66-73)

Baird (1974), who is highly critical of the graduate school environment, observed that, while the graduate school was achieving its goal of training students for the intellectual and social tasks required by our society, it was only partially organized to provide training for the ultimate societal tasks. Baird further stated that

In the process of preparing students for their fields the schools create their own culture with their own pressures and expectations. The folkways and demands of the school do not always relate to the preparation of students for their ultimate roles.

Specific graduate schools establish role expectations for the student and can apply pressures, rewards, and sanctions as appropriate. The student has to go along with the organization of the graduate school; for instance, a student of psychology may have to engage in work unrelated to the clinic before becoming a clinician (Baird, 1974). The student gives up all individual freedom and opportunities for development when entering the graduate program and agrees to do what s/he is told (Bellis, 1975; Ball et al., 1973).

Despite criticism on the above issues, the majority of studies show that graduate schools are fulfilling their role of educating students in our society. The graduate school determines what the student should or should not do in order to achieve satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion.

### Faculty/Student and Student/Student Relationships

If graduate students are to successfully complete their graduate programs, it will largely depend on the departmental support they receive from the faculty. Therefore, Burrell (1979) suggests that the development of strong faculty-student relationships leads to increased student satisfaction and achievement.

Bargar and Duncan (1982) draw the same conclusion regarding faculty-student relationships and note that the advisor or mentor of a student is a close, trusted, and experienced counselor or guide. Levinson (1978) amplifies the faculty-mentor role in the following passage:

He may act as a teacher to enhance the young man's skills and intellectual development. Serving as sponsor he may use his influence to facilitate the young man's entry and advancement. He may be host and guide, welcoming the initiate into a new occupational and social world and acquainting him with its values, customs, resources and cast of characters. Through his own virtues, achievements and ways of living, the mentor may be an exemplar that the protege can admire and seek to emulate. He may provide counsel and moral support in times of stress. (p. 98)

This type of interaction between students and faculty appears to be a positive factor in students' progress toward degrees. As indicated by Heiss (1967), doctoral students evaluate their academic progress more positively, the more personalized the orientation of their departments and the greater the opportunities for interaction with their professors.

The available literature confirms that faculty/student relationships are a very significant factor in students' academic progress and retention in graduate school. Bowen and Kilman (1975), who measured the learning climate of seven professional schools, found that task relationships with faculty, social relationships with faculty, and the grading process are important aspects of graduate student satisfaction. They concluded that student satisfaction is associated with a positive learning climate, which leads to satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion.

Schmidt and Sedlacek (1972) found that satisfaction differed depending upon the number of professors with whom the student was acquainted. Those feeling most satisfied were those students acquainted with six or more professors. Those students feeling most dissatisfied were those acquainted with no professors.

Matteson and Hamann (1975) saw student satisfaction differently and indicated that, in professors' daily routines of teaching courses and advising students, they are faced with the problem of satisfying the needs of a pluralistic clientele. Since the professors and students have often lived in cultures and subcultures quite different from each other, they tend to possess different sets of values. Given this difference in value orientations, it is not unusual that professors and students perceive educational needs and manner of satisfying students' needs quite differently. When such differences exist, it becomes necessary to address the situation so that it will not interfere with students' satisfactory educational experiences and academic progress.

#### Financial Status of Students

Graduate students' ability to defray the costs of their education may be a key factor in academic progress in graduate school. For example, the lack of financial aid has been cited in one national study as one of the most frequent reasons indicated by students for dropping out of school (Astin, 1972). Winston (1976) characterized the graduate student financial experience as an ambiguous one. The reason for the ambiguity is that graduate students have middle class values, but lack the income for middle class lifestyles. When graduate students try to live up to middle class standards, they find themselves in financial dilemmas and may opt for dropping out of school.



Sewell (1977) found that a student from a high socioeconomic background has a nine to one advantage over a student from a low socioeconomic background in succeeding in graduate or professional education. However, when a student decides to enter graduate school, either there are funds to support graduate study or such funds are not available. Socioeconomic background cannot determine success or academic progress unless the financial resources to enroll in a program are available to the student.

Berg and Faber (1983) suggest one way of alleviating graduate students' financial problems is to make more assistantships and fellowships available to students pursuing graduate study. These researchers found that despite the greatly differing distribution, among disciplines, of funds available to support graduate students, 71% of their male and 61% of their female respondents had assistantships or fellowships. Additionally, the researchers found that 64% of women and 27% of men received a great deal of financial support from their spouses to enable them to stay in graduate school. They concluded that it was not surprising that 94% of men and 74% of women listed the availability of financial aid as a reason for choosing a particular university as a place to study.

#### The Impact of Stress on Graduate Education

Even though stress alone is not among the variables being tested in this study, it was nonetheless a component of several of the variables selected. Thus it is worthwhile to review some of the relevant literature available in this area.

Since graduate study places a great deal of stress on students, who must comply with the demands of graduate education programs, no matter how arbitrary or unrealistic they are, the significance of stress cannot be ignored. We know from the work of Hartnett and Katz (1976) that stress is inherent in

both American undergraduate education patterned after the English college and American graduate education patterned after the German university. Altbach (1970) cited five conditions of graduate student life which cause friction, dissatisfaction, and general unhappiness. They are as follows.

1. Graduate students are adults in every sense of the term but are often treated as children by their universities.
2. Graduate students are often woefully exploited by individual professors, departments, and universities, by way of inadequate remuneration for work performed, work loads which almost preclude prompt completion of academic work, or occasional plagiarism by senior professors of students' original work.
3. Graduate students are subject to arbitrary treatment by professors, departments, or institutions and have few means of resisting such treatments.
4. Graduate students are often almost totally dependent on their professors or departments for livelihood, for certification as scholars, and possibly for future academic positions.
5. The role of a graduate student as a teaching or research colleague with a senior professor is often ambivalent. (p. 565)

Altbach (1970) credited the powerlessness of graduate students in the graduate environment as the basis for a great deal of stress. Halleck (1976) and Gilbert (1982) noted that the graduate education environment places added stress on the graduate student because the competitive atmosphere is not conducive to the development of intimate relationships. Married graduate students also face a great deal of stress because the amount of time they spend on graduate-related tasks is not available for family-related activities.

Valdez (1982), using the Holmes and Rahe Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) on first year doctoral students enrolled in a social welfare program, found that a considerable number of events such as the death of a loved one or a minor traffic violation may have occurred among first year graduate students and that they could, as a result, be under considerable stress. Whitman et al. (1984) found that some graduate students are tempted to give up their quest for

Ph.D.s due to "stress of passing hurdles," others contemplate withdrawal because of family problems, and probably most have periods of disillusionment with graduate education when continued pursuit of their goals seem an exercise in futility if not certifiable insanity.

Nelson (1971) found that the sources of stress for graduate students stem, in part, from an environmental setting that poses numerous challenges. Some students cope effectively and are strengthened by the experiences. Others do not cope as well and are distressed by graduate school. Although it represents a conservative estimation, Heiss (1970) determined a 50% non-completion rate among persons who enter graduate school with the intention of completing a Ph.D.

Selye (1974) conducted over 40 years of research and experimentation on stress, found that stress is healthy and productive; that it is "distress" that is counter-productive and unhealthy. He further determined that the only time an individual is completely free of stress is at death.

Prior studies have established that some stress in graduate school is beneficial and inescapable. Whitman et al. (1984) concluded that since many graduate students do not succeed in obtaining their degrees, and many of those who do succeed find the experience stressful, administrators, faculty members, and students must develop and encourage the use of coping mechanisms which will enable graduate students to more effectively deal with stress.

Some possible solutions were found in the literature to minimize stress in graduate school. They are:

1. Take every possible step to cut out sources of needless anxiety.
2. Requirements for advanced degrees should be challenging yet achievable.
3. Provide students with appropriate levels of control, particularly early in the program.

4. Most of the psychological stress and educational disillusionment resulting from too little independence seem to occur during the first year of graduate study, when students are locked into rigid patterns of required courses and examination. (Heiss, 1970, p. 283)

According to Sanford (1976), Bargar and Mayo-Chamberlin (1983), and Heiss (1970), advisors can be most effective in minimizing stress and creating a positive environment for graduate students in the following manner:

1. increase flexibility in program requirements and evaluation methods so that graduate students feel they can cope by means other than "beating the system" or "grinding it out" (Sanford, 1976, p. 1);
2. provide "positive, non-verbal cues and overt expressions of interest in a student's welfare" as well as "open discussion of the developmental issues confronting a student" (Bargar & Mayo-Chamberlin, 1983, p. 415); and
3. help reduce the stress associated with the doctoral dissertation by helping the student articulate and assess alternatives so that he or she can develop the topic earlier in the program and by supporting the student during topic development, research, writing, and oral defense. (Heiss, 1970, p. 125)

Individual strategies for facilitating personal adjustment to graduate school vary due to the varied demands that graduate schools place on individual students. Whitman and his associates (1984) suggest the following.

1. Only students willing to make a total commitment should attend graduate school.
2. They will experience a graduate school version of "freshman jitters."
3. Students feeling this stress should realize that other students, because of their own feelings of stress, engage in gamesmanship. Consequently, in their attempts to impress each other, graduate students become even more confused and frightened.
4. Graduate students who start having doubts about their own abilities should not put up a front when they are not familiar with terms and authorities. (pp. 49-103)

Suggestions for reducing distress among graduate students include:

1. providing orientation for new students,
2. increasing students' involvement in planning,
3. enhancing the role of advisors, and
4. improving the student's ability to cope with stress. (Whitman, 1984, pp. 49-103)

It can be observed from the literature reviewed that a certain amount of stress is essential for productivity. However, stress becomes problematic when it becomes counter-productive or the individual loses the ability to cope and deal with stress effectively.

Administrators, faculty members, and students can all play roles in eliminating or minimizing the extremes of disfunctional stress so that students will be able to achieve their desired goals.

#### Summary

In this review of selected literature, factors were examined that affect graduate students' progress toward degree completion in Educational Administration (academic progress, graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, student/student relationships, financial status of students, and the impact of stress) and ways in which the graduate environment can facilitate students' academic progress. The researcher established that graduate students' satisfaction with these factors influence persistence, progress, and retention in graduate school.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

This descriptive study was designed to examine the factors that affect graduate students' perceptions of their academic progress in Educational Administration at Michigan State University. The research questions, the population surveyed, the instrument used in collecting the data, and the procedures followed in collecting and analyzing the data are described in this chapter.

#### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. Is students' rate of academic progress associated with their financial status, program area, gender, marital status, age, race, nationality, and students' perceptions of their graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, and student/student relationships?
2. Is there a relationship among the students' socio-demographic variables (financial status, program area, gender, marital status, age, race, nationality) and their satisfaction with the graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, and student/student relationships?

#### The Research Population

The population for the study comprised doctoral students who were admitted to and subsequently enrolled in the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University (MSU) during academic year 1980-81. The Office of Student Affairs in the MSU College of Education identified 105 students as new admissions to the department for the 1980-81 academic year. Of

these, 29 were designated as "no shows," leaving a population of 76 who had enrolled in the department that year to begin doctoral programs.

These 76 new 1980-81 doctoral enrollees comprised the research population for this study. Since the study was carried out during the 1984-85 academic year, verification of current addresses for the subjects was very difficult. Groups that assisted the researcher in locating current or last known addresses of subjects, so that the survey instruments could be dispatched included: academic advisors in MSU's Department of Educational Administration, MSU's Alumni and Donor Records Office, the MSU Housing Office, and the MSU College of Education's Office of Student Affairs, individual students, and the United States Post Office. Since all 76 potential respondents came from the three programs within the Department of Educational Administration, the entire population was used to get as representative a response as possible from each program and the department as a whole.

#### Instrumentation

To obtain data on factors that affect graduate students' academic progress in Educational Administration at Michigan State University, a questionnaire was developed in April 1984.

#### Permission to Use Human Subjects

A request to conduct the research project using MSU students as subjects was approved on May 31, 1984, by the University Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects.

#### Questionnaire Development

A search of the literature failed to produce a suitable instrument; consequently, one was developed. The initial step in developing the

questionnaire was to review the related literature and identify the factors associated with graduate students' academic satisfaction and academic progress in graduate school. Six general areas were isolated: graduate students' (a) demographic information, (b) academic progress, (c) graduate education programs, (d) faculty/student relationships, (e) student/student relationships, and (f) the financial status of students.

#### Jury Review

A jury of five doctoral students and two faculty members from the Department of Educational Administration was established. These individuals, who represented many years of professional experience in teaching and evaluation, were asked to delete from, add to, and otherwise evaluate the questionnaire on clarity of directions to respondents, completeness, clarity of items, and the amount of time required to complete the instrument.

#### Pilot-Test

The survey instrument was refined in a pilot-test administered to five doctoral students (three females and two males) in EAD at MSU. Responses and suggestions from doctoral committee members and the pilot-test subjects resulted in clarification and reorganization of the questionnaire. It was also determined that completion of the survey instrument would take approximately 10-15 minutes.

Following the jury review, revisions were made and a final draft of the questionnaire was prepared that included six general areas:

1. graduate student demographics with five questions on gender, marital status, age, ethnicity and nationality, and two additional questions on the academic program, and the term and year in which students were admitted to and enrolled in the Department of Educational Administration (EAD);



2. academic progress, including 10 questions designed to examine graduate students' academic progress in EAD;
3. graduate education program, including one question with three parts selected to gather information on students' experience with the graduate education program;
4. faculty/student relationships, including two questions (one with three sections) selected to gather information on graduate students' experience with faculty members;
5. student/student relationships, including two questions (one with three sections) designed to gather information on graduate students' experience with their peers; and
6. financial status of students, including three questions selected to gather information on students' sources of financial support and socio-economic background of students.

In its final form, the questionnaire contained 23 items, some of which required multiple responses (see Appendix A).

#### Development of a Research Scale

To provide a framework for responses to attitudinal questions, a basic Likert scale was used to allow students to indicate relative levels of satisfaction. Values on the scale were assigned as follows:

- 1 = very satisfying
- 2 = satisfying
- 3 = neutral
- 4 = dissatisfying
- 5 = very dissatisfying

Respondents were asked to indicate their levels of satisfaction by circling the numbers that corresponded to their responses to each attitudinal statement or question.

Although the questionnaire survey method obtains lower response rates than the interview method as a research tool, it was selected over the interview method for this study, because subjects were scattered around the United States

and some foreign countries. In addition, the questions used were straightforward enough to give respondents a clear understanding of the types of information the researcher was interested in obtaining. The questionnaire method of collecting data also provided the researcher with a great deal of information in a minimal amount of time.

Questionnaires were distributed by US mail on June 5, 1984, to the 76 potential subjects identified. Included in each packet of materials were a questionnaire and a cover letter explaining the research project, a consent statement, and a statement that subjects were entitled to copies of the study's results, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning the completed questionnaire. A follow-up postcard was mailed to all subjects three weeks after the original letter. (Copies of the approval letter from the University Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects, the cover letter, the follow-up postcard, and the questionnaire are all included in the Appendix.)

Of the 76 questionnaires mailed, 41 were returned (see Table 3.1). Of those not returned, 13 questionnaires were reported to be undeliverable by the US Post Office, and 22 subjects did not respond.

Table 3.1  
Questionnaire Responses by Number and Percentage

<u>Questionnaires</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Distributed	76	100
Returned	41	54
Usable	33	43

Of those who returned questionnaires, five graduate students indicated they were not in doctoral programs in Educational Administration at MSU. Two

others indicated they were not actively involved in doctoral programs in Educational Administration and did not see the need to complete the questionnaires. One student had not taken any coursework throughout the three years she had been enrolled in the department. These eight respondents were removed from the study, leaving a final research population of 33 graduate students. Data reported in this study are based on the information reported by the 33 respondents found eligible to be part of the study.

### Analysis of Data

Examination of the completed questionnaires indicated that all questions could be used for analysis. In an effort to avoid repetition, related items were grouped together. The first seven questions provided demographic and other relevant background information on the respondents. Questions 8-17 were used to evaluate graduate students' academic progress. The questionnaire responses to questions 8-17 in particular were evaluated based on the respondents' performance throughout their four years of study as described by the academic progress report and the academic progress scale. The academic progress scale is defined in Chapter I under the section on definition of terms; on the scale, each of the 33 respondents was placed in one of three categories of progress on a scale of one to three. The remaining six questions were used to examine the graduate students' levels of satisfaction with their graduate education programs, faculty/student relationships, student/student relationships, and financial status.

Information gathered using the questionnaire survey was coded, tabulated, and then analyzed using MSU's Cyber 750 computer. Cross-tabulations, frequencies, means, percentages, and contingency tables were used as statistical tools in the analysis of the data. According to Bhattacharyya and Johnson (1977) in descriptive studies, the strength of association can be measured between two

or more characteristics by visual inspection of tables in order to show apparent relationship in distribution across rows and columns. Hence, a twenty (20) percentage point difference was used in this study to determine the existence of relationship between two or more groups.

#### Summary

The intent of this discussion was to describe the research design and procedures used in the study to examine the factors that affect graduate students' academic progress in the Department of Educational Administration at MSU. The chapter included a description of the population studied and a summary of the procedures used in obtaining the data for the study. Instrumentation or development of the questionnaire was discussed, as well as pilot-testing, jury review, and the development of a research scale. The questionnaire was disseminated by mail to 76 potential subjects, yielding 33 usable responses, which were coded and the data tabulated for analysis by cross-tabulation, frequencies, means, percentages, and contingency tables.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that affect graduate students' academic progress in Educational Administration at Michigan State University. The research design and procedures were presented in Chapter III; this chapter comprises results of the data analysis generated from the questionnaire responses.

#### A Description of Respondents

The total population (the individuals to whom questionnaires were sent) was 76. Completed and usable responses were returned by with 33 respondents (N = 33). These respondents were doctoral candidates admitted to and enrolled in the Department of Educational Administration during 1980-81. That department is composed of three programs: Adult and Continuing Education (ACE), College and University Administration (CUA), and K-12 Administration (K-12). Of the respondents who began programs during academic year 1980-81, the beginning year of the four-year study period, 3 were in ACE, 18 in CUA, and 12 in K-12.

Data were analyzed using cross-tabulations, frequencies, means, and percentages. Research findings are presented in this chapter in both narrative and tabular form. In those instances in which response rates were very low, the data are presented in narrative form only.

The first research question focused on whether students' academic progress is associated with financial status, program area, gender, marital status, age,

race, nationality, or the students' perceptions of the graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, and student/student relationships. Academic progress was defined as the administrative steps accomplished by students in fulfilling the requirements necessary for degree completion. Respondents were assigned to progress categories, based on their progress in fulfilling the administrative steps required by the university, within the time frame defined by the researcher as reasonable and appropriate for completing degree requirements. Academic progress was delineated and scored as follows:

Minimum progress: completed up to 50% of coursework but failed to establish a guidance committee

Good progress: completed at least 50% of all coursework, established a guidance committee, and/or presented a statement of educational goals within the first two years

Excellent progress: completed all requirements on or before schedule as outlined in the progress report

Table 4.1  
Academic Progress of Research Subjects by Number and Percentage (in parenthesis)

<u>Academic Progress</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Minimum	8	( 24.2)
Good	13	( 39.4)
Excellent	12	( 36.4)
Totals:	33	(100.0)

Questions 8 through 17 of the survey were used to measure respondents' academic progress. Based on scores of 1 to 3, respectively, for minimum to excellent progress, the majority of the students surveyed were making good or excellent academic progress (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2  
Rate of Academic Progress by Program Area  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Program Area	<u>Academic Progress</u>			<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	
ACE	1 (33.0)	0 ( 0.0)	2 (67.0)	3 ( 9.1)
CUA	4 (22.2)	8 (44.5)	6 (33.3)	18 ( 54.6)
K-12	3 (25.0)	5 (42.0)	4 (33.0)	12 ( 36.3)
Totals:	8 (24.3)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.3)	33 (100.0)

As shown in Table 4.2, the rate of a student's academic progress was not associated with the program in which the student was enrolled. Although ACE accounted for the smallest number of students enrolled in a program, 67% of the respondents made excellent academic progress.

Table 4.3  
Rate of Academic Progress by Age  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

	<u>Academic Progress</u>			<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	
30 years and younger	1 (33.3)	1 (33.3)	1 (33.3)	3 ( 9.0)
31 years and older	7 (23.0)	12 (40.0)	11 (37.0)	30 ( 91.0)
Totals:	8 (42.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Table 4.3 shows that there were clearly more doctoral students 31 years and older than 30 years and younger. Respondents of 30 years and younger were evenly distributed across the progress categories. Of those over 31 years, 77%

made good to excellent academic progress. Thus, the data indicated that the rate of academic progress was not related to the age of the respondent.

Table 4.4  
Rate of Academic Progress by Gender  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	
Females	3 (23.0)	5 (38.5)	5 (38.5)	13 ( 39.4)
Males	5 (25.0)	8 (39.4)	7 (35.0)	20 ( 60.6)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Grouped by gender, the data indicated that the rate of academic progress was not associated with the sex of the graduate students. Male and female respondents were almost equally distributed across the academic progress categories, with approximately 75% of each group scoring good to excellent progress (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.5  
Rate of Academic Progress by Marital Status  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Marital Status</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	
Single	2 (22.2)	5 (55.6)	2 (22.2)	9 ( 27.3)
Married	6 (25.0)	8 (33.3)	10 (41.7)	24 ( 72.7)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

As shown in Table 4.5, there was also no relationship between respondents' academic progress and their marital status. There were more married than single doctoral students in the sample who responded to the survey, and data showed that married students made excellent progress at a faster rate than did single students. There were more single students in the good academic progress category.



Table 4.6  
Rate of Academic Progress by Race  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Race</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Asian	0 ( 0.0)	2 (66.7)	1 (33.3)	3 ( 9.1)
Black	1 (16.7)	3 (50.0)	2 (33.3)	6 ( 18.2)
Caucasian	6 (28.6)	7 (33.3)	8 (38.1)	21 ( 63.6)
Hispanic	1 (33.3)	1 (33.3)	1 (33.3)	3 ( 9.1)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Rate of academic progress was not found to be related to the respondents' race. While there were clearly more Caucasian students admitted to and enrolled in Educational Administration, examination of their academic progress by percentages showed only minor differences in distribution across academic progress groups. (Ethnic groups were broken down in this section; however, throughout the rest of the text, Caucasian is compared with the three other ethnic groups combined and labeled minority groups--see Table 4.6).

Table 4.7  
Rate of Academic Progress by Nationality  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Nationality</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Totals</u>
American	7 (28.0)	9 (36.0)	9 (36.0)	25 ( 75.8)
International	1 (12.5)	4 (50.0)	3 (37.5)	8 ( 24.2)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

As shown in Table 4.7, rate of academic progress was not found to be associated with nationality.

Table 4.8  
Rate of Academic Progress by Student's Financial Status  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Financial Status</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Totals</u>
High	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 7.7)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Medium	6 (75.0)	12 (92.3)	10 (83.3)	28 ( 84.9)
Low	1 (12.5)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
None of the above	1 (12.5)	0 ( 0.0)	2 (16.7)	3 ( 9.1)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

The majority of respondents in this study (85%) reported that they belonged to a middle socioeconomic background. Three of the respondents said they did not belong to one of the three categories listed. Rather than arbitrarily assign them to a category, they were listed as "none of the above" (see Table 4.8).

#### Academic Progress

Students' satisfaction with the graduate education program variables was tested to determine if any relationship existed between satisfaction with any of these and academic progress.

Table 4.9  
Rate of Academic Progress by Level of Satisfaction with a Supportive Stressfree Graduate Education Program Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Satisfied	3 (37.5)	8 (61.5)	5 (42.0)	16 ( 48.5)
Neutral	2 (25.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 8.0)	3 ( 9.1)
Dissatisfied	2 (25.0)	1 ( 7.7)	1 ( 8.0)	4 (12.1)
Other	1 (12.5)	4 (30.8)	5 (42.0)	10 (30.3)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Across the three categories of progress, 48.5% of the respondents in this study reported satisfaction with the graduate education program environment and deemed it supportive. Only 12% were dissatisfied with their program environment; however, 30.3% of the sample reported "other." Their comments are summarized according to their academic progress. (These responses were reported by subjects who felt their comments could not fit in the three categories of satisfied, neutral, and dissatisfied. Therefore, their responses were placed in the category labeled "other.")

#### Excellent Progress

- a very supportive advisor who gave me good support
- supportive with some stress, especially during the dissertation writing phase
- my graduate program was not stressfree
- I perceived a great deal of stress, both in myself and in my peers; the departmental environment was very stressful
- a stressfree graduate education program environment--is there such a thing?

#### Good Progress

- trial and error supportive environment with a lot of stress
- partially supportive with a stressful program environment
- very supportive but far from stressfree
- nothing in life, my dear, is entirely stressfree, including completing your questionnaire

#### Minimum Progress

- being a single parent and working full time to complete my studies, professors have been very supportive

Table 4.10  
Rate of Academic Progress by Level of Satisfaction with a Supportive Learning Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Academic Progress</u>				
<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Satisfied	5 (62.5)	8 (61.5)	6 (50.0)	19 ( 58.0)
Neutral	3 (37.5)	3 (23.1)	4 (33.3)	10 ( 30.0)
Dissatisfied	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 8.3)	1 ( 3.0)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	2 (15.4)	1 ( 8.3)	3 ( 9.0)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Fifty-eight percent of all respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with the learning environment and deemed it supportive. Results across progress categories showed 50% or more of each category were satisfied (see Table 4.10).

Table 4.11  
Rate of Academic Progress by Level of Satisfaction with a Self-Esteem Building Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Academic Progress</u>				
<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Satisfied	2 (25.0)	9 (69.2)	6 (50.0)	17 ( 51.6)
Neutral	5 (63.0)	2 (15.4)	3 (25.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	1 (12.5)	1 ( 7.7)	2 (16.7)	4 ( 12.1)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 7.7)	1 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.0)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Of the respondents in the study, 51.6% reported that they were satisfied with the learning environment and considered it self-esteem building. However, students making good academic progress reported a higher level of satisfaction compared to the other two progress categories. Students making minimum progress were the least satisfied (see Table 4.11).

Table 4.12  
Rate of Academic Progress by Level of Satisfaction with Self in  
Faculty/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Satisfied	6 (75.0)	12 (92.3)	11 (91.7)	29 ( 88.0)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)
Dissatisfied	2 (25.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 8.3)	3 ( 9.0)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 7.7)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Based on the data, 88% of all respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with their faculty relationships. A smaller percentage of respondents in the minimum category of progress (75%) reported that they were satisfied, compared to 92.3% and 91.7%, respectively, in the good and excellent categories (see Table 4.12).

As shown in Table 4.13a, 97% of the respondents in the study reported satisfying academic relationships with at least one faculty member.

Table 4.13a  
Rate of Academic Progress with Positive Relationships with Faculty  
Members  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Six or more	2 (25.0)	5 (38.5)	2 (16.7)	9 ( 27.3)
Four or five	4 (50.0)	4 (30.8)	3 (25.0)	11 ( 33.3)
One to three	2 (25.0)	3 (23.0)	7 (58.3)	12 ( 36.4)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 7.7)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Thirty-six percent of those who responded to the question about negative relationships with faculty reported that they experienced a dissatisfying academic relationship with at least one faculty member. Fifty percent of those

responding were in the excellent progress category, and 46.2% were in the good progress category. None of those making minimum progress reported negative relationships. However, 64% of the total sample did not respond to this question (see Table 4.13b).

Table 4.13b

Rate of Academic Progress with Negative Relationships with Faculty Members

(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Dissatisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Academic Progress			Totals
	Minimum	Good	Excellent	
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 7.7)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	2 (16.7)	2 ( 6.0)
One to three	0 ( 0.0)	5 (38.5)	4 (33.3)	9 (27.0)
Did not respond	8 (100.0)	7 (53.8)	6 (50.0)	21 ( 64.0)
Totals:	8 ( 24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

The following presentation of findings includes those for the two categories--neutral and dissatisfying; however, such small numbers of students responded to those items that they are not included in the tables. They are included in the discussion when appropriate.

Table 4.14

Task/Professional Relationships with Faculty Members--Rate of Academic Progress with Positive Relationships

(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Academic Progress			Totals
	Minimum	Good	Excellent	
Six or more	1 (12.5)	4 (30.8)	2 (16.7)	7 ( 21.2)
Four or five	2 (25.0)	3 (23.1)	3 (25.0)	8 ( 24.3)
One to three	3 (37.5)	4 (30.8)	7 (58.3)	14 ( 42.4)
Did not respond	2 (25.0)	2 (15.3)	0 ( 0.0)	4 ( 12.1)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Based on the data, 87.9% of the respondents in the study reported that they experienced a satisfying task/professional relationship with at least one faculty member. Although the majority of the respondents reported that they had a satisfying task/professional relationship, all respondents in the excellent progress category did so. Very few respondents reported neutral task/professional relationships with faculty members.

More than 60% of the respondents in the study did not report any dissatisfying task/professional relationships with members of the faculty. However, respondents who made minimum academic progress reported fewer dissatisfying task/professional relationships with members of the faculty, compared to respondents in the other two categories of progress (see Table 4.14).

Table 4.15

Social Interaction with Faculty Members--Rate of Academic Progress with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Academic Progress			
	Minimum	Good	Excellent	Totals
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 7.7)	1 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.1)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 8.3)	1 ( 3.0)
One to three	2 (25.0)	8 (61.5)	6 (50.0)	16 ( 48.5)
Did not respond	6 (75.0)	4 (30.8)	4 (33.4)	14 ( 42.4)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

As shown in Table 4.15, 57.6% of the subjects who responded reported satisfying social interactions with at least one faculty member. Respondents who made minimum academic progress reported fewer such interactions with faculty than those making good or excellent progress. A large percentage of the sample, 62.4%, did not respond to this question.

Seventy-six percent of the respondents did not report any neutral social interactions with faculty members.

Regardless of academic progress, few respondents reported dissatisfying social interactions with faculty members. Among those making good progress, 30% reported dissatisfying social interactions with one to three faculty members.

Table 4.16

Rate of Academic Progress by Level of Satisfaction with Self in Student/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	
Satisfied	5 (62.5)	8 (61.5)	5 (41.7)	18 ( 55.0)
Neutral	1 (12.5)	3 (23.1)	5 (41.7)	9 ( 27.0)
Dissatisfied	1 (12.5)	2 (15.4)	1 ( 8.3)	4 ( 12.0)
Did not respond	1 (12.5)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.0)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Of the respondents in the study, 55% reported that they were satisfied with their student peer relationships. Of respondents who made minimum and good academic progress, 62.5% and 61.5%, respectively, reported that they were satisfied with peer relationships, compared to 41.7% of the respondents who made excellent academic progress (see Table 4.16)

Table 4.17

Academic Relationships with Peers--Rate of Academic Progress with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction with Number of Peers</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	
Six or more	2 (25.0)	2 (15.4)	2 (16.7)	6 ( 18.2)
Four or five	1 (12.5)	1 ( 7.7)	5 (41.6)	7 ( 21.2)
One to three	2 (25.0)	2 (15.4)	3 (25.0)	7 ( 21.2)
Did not respond	3 (37.5)	8 (61.5)	2 (16.7)	13 ( 39.4)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)



Slightly more than 60% of the respondents reported satisfying academic relationships with at least one peer (see Table 4.17). Respondents making excellent academic progress, compared to those in the other two categories of progress, reported more satisfying relationships with their peers.

Very few respondents reported experiencing neutral or dissatisfying academic relationships with their peers.

Table 4.18

Intellectual Interaction with Peers--Rate of Academic Progress with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Academic Progress			Totals
	Minimum	Good	Excellent	
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	2 (15.4)	3 (25.0)	5 ( 15.2)
Four or five	1 (12.5)	1 ( 7.7)	3 (25.0)	5 ( 15.2)
One to three	3 (37.5)	7 (53.8)	4 (33.3)	14 ( 42.4)
Did not respond	4 (50.0)	3 (23.1)	2 (16.7)	9 ( 27.2)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Of the respondents in the study, 72.8% reported that they experienced satisfying intellectual interactions with at least one peer (see Table 4.18). More respondents in the good and excellent categories than the minimum category reported that they experienced satisfying intellectual interaction with at least one peer.

A very small percentage of the respondents in the study reported neutral or dissatisfying intellectual interactions with peers. Thirty-three percent of the respondents who made excellent academic progress reported neutral intellectual interaction with at least one peer, compared to 15% in the good category of progress and none in the minimum category of progress.

Of the respondents who reported dissatisfying intellectual interactions with their peers, eight percent made excellent and good academic progress.

Table 4.19

Social Interaction with Peers--Rate of Academic Progress with Positive Relationships with Peers  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Academic Progress			Totals
	Minimum	Good	Excellent	
Six or more	2 (25.0)	3 (23.0)	3 (25.0)	8 ( 24.2)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	2 (15.4)	1 ( 8.3)	3 ( 9.1)
One to three	1 (12.5)	6 (46.2)	6 (50.0)	13 ( 39.4)
Did not respond	5 (62.5)	2 (15.4)	2 (16.7)	9 ( 27.3)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.6)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Based on the data, 72.7% of the respondents in the study reported that they experienced satisfying social interactions with at least one peer. However, more respondents in the good and excellent progress categories reported satisfying relationships with at least one peer compared to respondents in the minimum progress category.

Most of the respondents reported satisfying social interactions with peers. Very few neutral and dissatisfying social interactions were reported. Seventeen percent of those who reported neutral relationships made excellent academic progress, 15% made good academic progress, and 25% made minimum academic progress (see Table 4.19).

Respondents who reported dissatisfying social interactions with peers included eight percent who made good academic progress and 13% who made minimum academic progress, while none of the respondents in the excellent category of progress reported dissatisfying social interaction with at least one peer.

Table 4.20  
Rate of Academic Progress by Level of Satisfaction with Adequacy of  
Financial Aid  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Academic Progress</u>			<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Excellent</u>	
Adequate	5 (62.5)	11 (84.6)	7 (58.3)	23 ( 70.0)
Neutral	1 (12.5)	1 ( 7.7)	2 (16.6)	4 ( 12.0)
Inadequate	2 (25.0)	0 ( 0.0)	3 (25.0)	5 ( 15.0)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 7.7)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	8 (24.2)	13 (39.4)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Seventy percent of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with the adequacy of their financial aid (see Table 4.20). When separated by category, 84.6% of the respondents who made good academic progress, 62.5% who made minimum progress, and 58.3% who made excellent progress reported that their financial aid was adequate.

The second research question focused on whether a relationship exists between students' socio-demographic variables (financial status, program area, gender, marital status, age, race, nationality) and their perceived levels of satisfaction with their graduate education programs, faculty/student relationships, and student/student relationships?

#### Financial Status

Students' financial status as determined by their level of satisfaction was one of the socio-demographic variables considered for analysis. However, 85% of the respondents in the study reported that they came from middle socio-economic backgrounds; 9% of the remaining 15% did not belong to the listed categories, and the remaining 6% came from high and low socio-economic

backgrounds. When financial status was tested alone for relationship with satisfaction, the uneven distribution prevented meaningful interpretation.

### Program Area

The following socio-demographic variables were tested to determine if a relationship existed between students' program area and their level of satisfaction with the graduate education program variables.

Table 4.21  
Program Area by Level of Satisfaction with Stressfree Graduate  
Education Program Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Program Area</u>			<u>Totals</u>
	<u>ACE</u>	<u>CUA</u>	<u>K-12</u>	
Satisfied	1 (33.3)	12 (66.7)	2 (16.7)	15 ( 45.5)
Neutral	1 (33.3)	0 ( 0.0)	3 (25.0)	4 ( 12.1)
Dissatisfied	1 (33.3)	2 (11.1)	1 ( 8.3)	4 ( 12.1)
Other	0 ( 0.0)	4 (22.2)	6 (50.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

NOTE: Some totals may not add to 100% due to the rounding of figures.

Of the respondents in the study, 45.5% reported that they experienced a stressfree graduate education program environment (see Table 4.21). However, 50% of the K-12 respondents, compared to 22.2% of the CUA respondents, listed "other" as their responses. Their comments are summarized below by program area.

### College and University Administration

- trial and error supportive environment with a lot of stress
- being a single parent, working full time, instructors have been very supportive
- I perceived a great deal of stress, both in myself and in my peers; the departmental environment was very stressful
- a supportive graduate program environment . . . is there such a thing?

### K-12 Administration

- I have found the program to be supportive but far from stressfree
- partially supportive, but far from stressfree
- a very supportive advisor who gave me good advice
- supportive with some stress, especially during the dissertation writing phase
- nothing in life, my dear, is entirely stressfree
- my graduate education was not stressfree

Table 4.22

Supportive Learning Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Satisfied	1 (33.3)	15 (83.0)	3 (25.0)	19 ( 57.6)
Neutral	1 (33.3)	2 (11.0)	7 (58.3)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	1 (33.3)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 6.0)	2 (16.7)	3 ( 9.1)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

As shown in Table 4.22, 57.6% of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with the learning environment and deemed it supportive. Viewed by program, 83% of the CUA respondents reported that they were satisfied, compared to 25% of the respondents enrolled in K-12.

Table 4.23  
Self-Esteem Building Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Satisfied	2 (67.0)	13 (72.2)	2 (16.7)	17 ( 51.5)
Neutral	1 (33.0)	4 (22.2)	5 (41.6)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	3 (25.0)	3 ( 9.1)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 5.6)	2 (16.7)	3 ( 9.1)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

According to the data, 51.5% of all the respondents in the study indicated that they were satisfied with the graduate education program environment and considered it self-esteem building (see Table 4.23). However, 72.2% of the CUA respondents, compared to 16.7% of the K-12 respondents, reported that they were satisfied.

Table 4.24  
Satisfaction with Self in Faculty/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Satisfied	1 (33.3)	18 (100.0)	10 (83.3)	29 ( 88.0)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 8.3)	1 ( 3.0)
Dissatisfied	2 (66.7)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 6.0)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 8.3)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 ( 54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

In general, graduate students were satisfied with themselves and with their relationships with faculty (88%). One hundred percent of the respondents in CUA reported satisfaction with their faculty relationships compared to 83.3% of the K-12 respondents (see Table 4.24). Although the total number was small, more ACE respondents were dissatisfied with their faculty relationships.

Ninety-six percent of all respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied in their academic relationships with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.25a).

Table 4.25a  
Academic Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	7 (38.9)	2 (16.7)	9 ( 27.3)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	6 (33.3)	4 (33.3)	10 ( 30.3)
One to three	3 (100.0)	5 (27.8)	5 (41.7)	13 ( 39.4)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 8.3)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Table 4.25b  
Academic Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Negative Relationships

Dissatisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 5.5)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 5.5)	1 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.1)
One to three	2 (66.7)	5 (27.9)	3 (25.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Did not respond	1 (33.3)	11 (61.1)	8 (66.7)	20 ( 60.6)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.1)	33 (100.0)

Of all respondents, 39.4% reported that they experienced dissatisfying academic relationships with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.25b). When reported by program, 38.9% of the CUA respondents reported dissatisfying academic relationships with at least one faculty member, compared to 33.3% of the K-12, and 66.7% of the ACE respondents.

Table 4.26  
Task/Professional Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	5 (27.8)	2 (16.7)	7 ( 21.2)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	5 (27.8)	3 (25.0)	8 ( 24.2)
One to three	2 (67.0)	7 (38.8)	5 (41.6)	14 ( 42.5)
Did not respond	1 (33.0)	1 ( 5.6)	2 (16.7)	4 ( 12.1)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Of all respondents in the study, 87.9% reported that they were satisfied in task/professional relationships with at least one faculty member. Fewer respondents in ACE and K-12, compared to CUA respondents, had satisfying task/professional relationships with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.26).

Over 75% of all respondents in the study reported no neutral task/professional interaction with faculty members. All who reported were in K-12 administration.

Fewer than 30% of all respondents in the study reported dissatisfying task/professional relationships with faculty members. Of those who reported, 33% were K-12, 33% were ACE, and 22% were CUA respondents.

Table 4.27  
Social Interaction with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	2 (11.1)	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 6.1)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 6.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
One to three	1 (33.0)	9 (50.0)	6 (50.0)	16 ( 48.5)
Did not respond	2 (67.0)	6 (33.0)	6 (50.0)	14 ( 42.4)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)



When analyzed by program, of those who reported satisfying social interactions with faculty members, 50% were enrolled in K-12, 67% in CUA, and 33.3% in ACE. A relatively large number (42.4%) did not respond to this question (see Table 4.27).

Fewer than 30% of all respondents reported neutral social interaction with faculty members. The respondents who reported included 32% in CUA and 16.7% in K-12 administration.

Twenty-two percent of the CUA and 16% of the K-12 respondents reported dissatisfying social interactions with faculty members.

Table 4.28  
Satisfaction with Self in Student/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Program Area			Totals
	ACE	CUA	K-12	
Satisfied	1 (33.3)	9 (50.0)	8 (66.7)	18 ( 54.5)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	6 (33.3)	3 (25.0)	9 ( 27.2)
Dissatisfied	1 (33.3)	3 (16.7)	0 ( 0.0)	4 ( 12.1)
Did not respond	1 (33.3)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.1)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

The data in Table 4.28 show that 54.5% of all respondents were satisfied with themselves in student/student relationships. Of the three programs, 66.7% of the respondents in K-12 reported satisfaction with themselves in student relationships, compared to 33.3% in ACE and 50% in CUA.

Table 4.29  
Academic Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	2 (11.1)	4 (33.3)	6 ( 18.1)
Four or five	1 (33.3)	3 (16.6)	3 (25.0)	7 ( 21.3)
One to three	1 (33.3)	6 (33.3)	2 (16.7)	9 ( 27.3)
Did not respond	1 (33.3)	7 (39.0)	3 (25.0)	11 ( 33.3)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

The data on academic interaction with peers indicated that 66.7% of the graduate students in the study reported that they were satisfied in their interactions with at least one peer (see Table 4.29).

Respondents reported having very few neutral relationships with their peers. Of those who reported neutral relationships, 21% were from the CUA program and 16% were from the K-12 program.

In addition, respondents reported even fewer dissatisfying academic interactions with their peers. Sixteen percent of those reporting dissatisfying interactions were from the CUA program and eight percent were from the K-12 program.

Table 4.30  
Intellectual Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	3 (16.7)	2 (16.7)	5 ( 15.1)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	2 (11.1)	3 (25.0)	5 ( 15.1)
One to three	2 (67.0)	9 (50.0)	3 (25.0)	14 ( 42.5)
Did not respond	1 (33.0)	4 (22.2)	4 (33.3)	9 ( 27.3)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Over 72% of the graduate students in the study reported satisfying intellectual interactions with at least one peer (see Table 4.30). Fifty percent of the CUA respondents reported satisfying intellectual interaction with one to three peers, compared to 25% of the K-12 respondents. Twenty-two percent of the CUA respondents reported neutral intellectual interactions with at least one peer, compared to eight percent of the K-12 respondents. Ninety-four percent of the respondents across the three program areas did not report dissatisfying intellectual interaction with their peers. Only 11% of the CUA respondents reported such an experience.

Table 4.31  
Social Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Program Area			
	ACE	CUA	K-12	Totals
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	4 (22.2)	4 (33.3)	8 ( 24.2)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	2 (11.1)	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 6.1)
One to three	1 (33.0)	7 (38.9)	5 (41.7)	13 ( 39.4)
Did not respond	2 (67.0)	5 (27.8)	3 (25.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Table 4.31 shows that 69.7% of the respondents in the study reported that they experienced satisfying social interaction with at least one of their peers. Twenty-two percent of the CUA respondents reported neutral social interactions with peers, compared to 16% of the K-12 respondents. Fewer respondents across the three program areas reported dissatisfying social interactions with peers. Of those who reported dissatisfying social interactions, 11% were from the CUA program and eight percent from the K-12 program.

Table 4.32  
Adequacy of Financial Aid  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Program Area</u>			
	<u>ACE</u>	<u>CUA</u>	<u>K-12</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Satisfied	3 (100.0)	12 (66.7)	8 (66.6)	23 ( 69.8)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	2 (11.1)	2 (16.7)	4 ( 12.1)
Dissatisfied	0 ( 0.0)	3 (16.7)	2 (16.7)	5 ( 15.1)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 5.5)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	3 ( 9.1)	18 (54.5)	12 (36.4)	33 (100.0)

Almost 70% of the respondents in the study reported that their financial aid was adequate (see Table 4.32).

### Age

Age was one of the socio-demographic variables considered for analysis. However, the uneven distribution of the data (nine percent of the respondents were age 30 years and younger and 91% were 31 years and older) effectively prevented meaningful interpretation.

### Gender

The socio-demographic variable gender was tested to determine if a relationship existed between it and students' level of satisfaction with the graduate education program variables.

Table 4.33  
Gender by Level of Satisfaction with a Stressfree Graduate Education  
Program Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Gender</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	
Satisfied	7 (53.8)	9 (45.0)	16 ( 48.5)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	3 (15.0)	3 ( 9.1)
Dissatisfied	1 ( 7.6)	3 (15.0)	4 ( 12.1)
Other	5 (38.6)	5 (25.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

Almost 49% of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with the graduate education program environment and considered it stressfree (see Table 4.33). The category labeled "other" was designated for the 30.3% of the respondents who expressed their experiences with the graduate educational program environment in writing rather than in one of the categories assigned by the researcher. The comments of the respondents in this category are summarized according to gender.

Female Respondents' Comments

- I have found the program to be supportive, but far from stressfree
- a very supportive advisor who gave me good advice
- being a single parent working full time, instructors have been very supportive
- partially supportive with a stressful program environment
- I perceived a great deal of stress in myself and in my peers; the departmental environment was very stressful

Male Respondents' Comments

- trial and error supportive environment with a lot of stress
- my graduate program was not stressfree
- supportive with some stress, especially during the dissertation writing phase
- a supportive graduate education program environment-- is there such a thing?
- nothing in life, my dear, is entirely stressfree

Table 4.34  
Supportive Learning Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Gender</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	
Satisfied	8 (62.0)	11 (55.0)	19 ( 57.6)
Neutral	3 (23.0)	7 (35.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 5.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Did not respond	2 (15.0)	1 ( 5.0)	3 ( 9.1)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

Of the graduate students who responded to the survey, 57.6% reported that they were satisfied with the learning environment and deemed it supportive (see Table 4.34). A higher percentage of the female respondents (62%), compared to 55% of the male respondents, reported satisfaction.

Table 4.35  
Self-Esteem Building Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Gender</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	
Satisfied	8 (61.5)	9 (45.0)	17 ( 51.6)
Neutral	3 (23.1)	7 (35.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	1 ( 7.7)	3 (15.0)	4 ( 12.1)
Did not respond	1 ( 7.7)	1 ( 5.0)	2 ( 6.0)
Totals:	13 (39.3)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

As displayed in Table 4.35, 51.6% of all respondents in the study reported satisfaction with the graduate environment and considered it self-esteem building. A majority of the female respondents (61.5%), but only 45% of the male respondents, reported that they were satisfied.

Table 4.36  
Satisfaction with Self in Faculty/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Gender</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	
Satisfied	13 (100.0)	16 (80.0)	29 ( 87.9)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)
Dissatisfied	0 ( 0.0)	3 (15.0)	3 ( 9.1)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 5.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	13 ( 39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

Based on the data, 87.9% of all respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with themselves in faculty/student relationships (see Table 4.36). All the female respondents, compared to 80% of the male respondents, reported satisfaction with these relationships.

Table 4.37a

Academic Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction  
with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Gender		Totals
	Females	Males	
Six or more	2 (15.4)	7 (35.0)	9 ( 27.3)
Four or five	6 (46.1)	5 (25.0)	11 ( 33.3)
One to three	5 (38.5)	8 (40.0)	13 ( 39.4)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

According to the data, all respondents reported satisfying academic relationships with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.37a). However, 35% of the male respondents, compared to 15% of the female respondents, reported satisfying relationships with six or more faculty members.

Table 4.37b

Academic Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction  
with Negative Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Dissatisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Gender		Totals
	Females	Males	
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 5.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Four or five	1 ( 7.7)	1 ( 5.0)	2 ( 6.0)
One to three	1 ( 7.7)	8 (40.0)	9 ( 27.0)
Did not respond	11 (84.6)	10 (50.0)	21 ( 64.0)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

Sixty-four percent of the respondents in the study did not respond to this item. However, of those responding, 50% of the male respondents reported dissatisfying academic relationships with at least one faculty member, compared to 15.4% of the female respondents (see Table 4.37b).

Table 4.38  
Task/Professional Relationship with Faculty Members--Level of  
Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Gender		Totals
	Females	Males	
Six or more	1 ( 7.7)	6 (30.0)	7 ( 21.2)
Four or five	3 (23.1)	5 (25.0)	8 ( 24.2)
One to three	7 (53.8)	8 (40.0)	15 ( 45.5)
Did not respond	2 (15.3)	1 ( 5.0)	3 ( 9.1)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

Ninety-one percent of the graduate students in the study reported that they experienced a satisfying task/professional relationship with at least one faculty member. However, 30.3% of the male respondents, compared to 7.7% of the female respondents, reported satisfying task/professional relationships with six or more faculty members (see Table 4.38). Twenty-three percent of the females, compared to 36% of the male respondents, reported neutral task/professional relationship with at least one faculty member. In addition, 55% of the male respondents, compared to 15% of the female respondents, reported dissatisfying task/professional relationship with at least one faculty member.

Table 4.39  
Social Interaction with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with  
Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Gender		Totals
	Females	Males	
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	2 (10.0)	2 ( 6.1)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)
One to three	7 (53.8)	10 (50.0)	17 ( 51.5)
Did not respond	6 (46.2)	8 (40.0)	14 ( 42.4)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)



Although 57.6% of all respondents in the study reported satisfying social interaction with at least one faculty member, 53.8% of the females, compared to 50% of the male respondents, reported satisfaction (see Table 4.39). Thirty-five percent of the females, compared to 15% of the male respondents, reported neutral social interaction with at least one faculty member. Also, 23% of the female respondents, compared to 15% of the male respondents, reported dissatisfying social interactions with at least one faculty member.

Table 4.40  
Satisfaction with Self in Student/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Gender</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	
Satisfied	9 (69.2)	8 (40.0)	17 (51.5)
Neutral	2 (15.4)	8 (40.0)	10 (30.3)
Dissatisfied	1 (7.7)	3 (15.0)	4 (12.1)
Did not respond	1 (7.7)	1 (5.0)	2 (6.1)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

Over 50% of the graduate students in the study reported that they were satisfied with themselves in their student/student relationships (see Table 4.40). However, 69.2% of the females, compared to 40% of the male respondents, reported that they were satisfied with themselves in student relationships.

Table 4.41  
Academic Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction with Number of Peers</u>	<u>Gender</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	
Six or more	3 (23.1)	3 (15.0)	6 (18.1)
Four or five	2 (15.3)	5 (25.0)	7 (21.2)
One to three	3 (23.1)	4 (20.0)	7 (21.2)
Did not respond	5 (38.5)	8 (40.0)	13 (39.4)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

Based on the data, 60.6% of the respondents in the study reported satisfying academic interactions with their peers. Eighty percent of the respondents did not report neutral academic interactions with their peers. Of those who reported, 23% were females and 15% were male respondents. Nineteen percent of the males, compared to 15% of the females, reported dissatisfying academic relationships with at least one peer (see Table 4.41).

Table 4.42  
Intellectual Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Gender		Totals
	Females	Males	
Six or more	3 (23.1)	2 (10.0)	5 ( 15.2)
Four or five	2 (15.3)	3 (15.0)	5 ( 15.2)
One to three	3 (23.1)	11 (55.0)	14 ( 42.4)
Did not respond	5 (38.5)	4 (20.0)	9 ( 27.2)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

Table 4.42 shows that 72.8% of all respondents in the study reported satisfying intellectual interaction with at least one peer. However, more of the male respondents, compared to female respondents, reported satisfying intellectual interactions with at least one peer. Twenty-three percent of the male respondents, compared to 15% of the female respondents reported neutral intellectual interactions with peers. Even fewer of the respondents reported dissatisfying intellectual interactions with peers. Of those who reported, seven percent were males and five percent were females.

Table 4.43  
Social Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Gender		Totals
	Females	Males	
Six or more	2 (15.3)	6 (30.0)	8 ( 24.2)
Four or five	1 ( 7.7)	1 ( 5.0)	2 ( 6.1)
One to three	6 (46.0)	7 (35.0)	13 ( 39.4)
Did not respond	4 (31.0)	6 (35.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

Table 4.43 indicates that 69.7% of the respondents in the study reported satisfying social interaction with at least one peer. Very few respondents reported neutral social interaction with their peers. Of those who reported neutral interaction, 20% were male and 15% were female. Fewer respondents reported dissatisfying interactions with their peers. Of those who reported dissatisfying interactions, 15% were male and seven percent were female.

Table 4.44  
Adequacy of Financial Aid  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Adequacy	Gender		Totals
	Females	Males	
Adequate	9 (69.2)	14 (70.0)	23 ( 69.7)
Neutral	3 (23.1)	1 ( 5.0)	4 ( 12.1)
Inadequate	1 ( 7.7)	4 (20.0)	5 ( 15.2)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 5.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	13 (39.4)	20 (60.6)	33 (100.0)

According to the data, 69.7% of graduate students in the study reported that their financial aid was adequate (see Table 4.44). Female and male respondents reported satisfaction at about the same rate.

### Marital Status

The socio-demographic variable marital status was tested to determine if a relationship existed between it and students' satisfaction with the graduate education program variables.

Table 4.45

Marital Status by Level of Satisfaction with a Stressfree Graduate Education Program Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Single</u>	<u>Married</u>	
Satisfied	3 (33.3)	13 (54.0)	16 ( 48.5)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	4 (16.7)	4 ( 12.1)
Dissatisfied	1 (11.1)	2 ( 8.3)	3 ( 9.1)
Other	5 (55.6)	5 (21.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

The data indicated that 48.5% of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with the graduate education program environment and deemed it stressfree (see Table 4.45). However, 54% of the married respondents, compared to 33.3% of the single respondents, reported satisfaction. In addition, 55.6% of the single respondents, compared to 21% of the married respondents, summarized their comments about the graduate education program environment. The respondents' comments are listed according to their marital status.

#### Single Respondents

- trial and error supportive environment with a lot of stress
- I have found the program to be supportive, but far from stressfree
- partially supportive with a stressful program environment
- a very supportive advisor who gave me good advice
- being a single parent working full time, instructors have been very supportive

Married Respondents

- my graduate education was not stressfree
- supportive with some stress, especially during the dissertation writing phase
- nothing in life, my dear, is entirely stressfree
- I perceived a great deal of stress, both in myself and in my peers; the departmental environment was very stressful
- a supportive graduate education program environment--is there such a thing?

Table 4.46  
Supportive Learning Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Single</u>	<u>Married</u>	
Satisfied	5 (55.6)	14 (58.4)	19 ( 57.6)
Neutral	2 (22.2)	8 (33.3)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 4.1)	1 ( 3.0)
Did not respond	2 (22.2)	1 ( 4.1)	3 ( 9.1)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

Although 57.6% of the respondents in the study indicated that they were satisfied with the learning environment as being supportive, 58.4% of the married respondents, compared to 55.6% of the single respondents, indicated that they were satisfied (see Table 4.46)

Table 4.47  
Self-Esteem Building Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Single</u>	<u>Married</u>	
Satisfied	4 (44.5)	13 (54.1)	17 ( 51.6)
Neutral	2 (22.2)	8 (33.3)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	1 (11.1)	3 (12.6)	4 ( 12.1)
Did not respond	2 (22.2)	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 6.0)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

From Table 4.47, it is apparent that 51.6% of the respondents in the study indicated that they were satisfied with the graduate environment as being self-esteem building. However, 55.1% of the married respondents, compared to 44.5% of the single respondents, reported satisfaction.

Table 4.48  
Satisfaction with Self in Faculty/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Single</u>	<u>Married</u>	
Satisfied	9 (100.0)	20 (83.3)	29 ( 87.9)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)
Dissatisfied	0 ( 0.0)	3 (12.5)	3 ( 9.1)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 4.2)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	9 ( 27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

Of the respondents in the study, 87.9% reported that they were satisfied with themselves in faculty/student relationships (see Table 4.48). In addition, all the single respondents, compared to 83.3% of the married respondents, reported that they were satisfied.

Table 4.49a  
Academic Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction  
with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Single</u>	<u>Married</u>	
Six or more	2 (22.2)	7 (29.2)	9 ( 27.3)
Four or five	4 (44.4)	6 (25.0)	10 ( 30.3)
One to three	3 (33.3)	10 (41.7)	13 ( 39.4)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 4.1)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

Ninety-seven percent of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with the academic relationships they had with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.49a).

According to the data, 36.3% of the respondents in the study reported dissatisfying academic relationships with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.49b). In addition, 44.4% of the single respondents, compared to 20.8% of the married respondents, reported dissatisfying relationships with at least one faculty member. A large number of the respondents (63.6%) did not answer this question.

Table 4.49b  
Academic Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Negative Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Dissatisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Marital Status		Totals
	Single	Married	
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 4.2)	1 ( 3.0)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.0)
One to three	4 (44.4)	5 (20.8)	9 ( 27.3)
Did not respond	5 (55.6)	16 (66.7)	21 ( 63.6)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

Based on the data, 87.9% of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied in their task/professional relationships with at least one member of the faculty. Of the single respondents, 100%, compared to 83.4% of the married respondents, reported satisfaction. Of the respondents who reported neutral task/professional relationships with faculty members, 25% were married and 23% were single. In addition, 33% of the single respondents, compared to 29% of the married respondents, reported dissatisfying task/professional interactions with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.50).

Table 4.50

Task/Professional Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Numbers of Faculty Members	Marital Status		Totals
	Single	Married	
Six or more	1 (11.1)	6 (25.0)	7 ( 21.2)
Four or five	4 (44.4)	4 (16.7)	8 ( 24.2)
One to three	4 (44.4)	10 (41.7)	14 ( 42.5)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	4 (16.6)	4 ( 12.1)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

Sixty-three percent of the respondents in the study reported satisfying social interaction with at least one faculty member. Furthermore, 88.9% of the single respondents, compared to 54.1% of the married respondents, reported satisfying social interactions with at least one member of the faculty. Of those respondents who reported neutral social relationships with at least one faculty member, 55% were single and 16% were married. Thirty-three percent of the single respondents, compared to 12% of the married respondents, reported dissatisfying social relationships with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.51).

Table 4.51

Social Interaction with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Numbers of Faculty Members	Marital Status		Totals
	Single	Married	
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.0)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.0)
One to three	8 (88.9)	9 (37.5)	17 ( 51.6)
Did not respond	1 (11.1)	11 (45.9)	12 ( 36.4)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)



As displayed in Table 4.52, 51% of the respondents in the study reported satisfaction with themselves in student/student relationships. In addition, 66.7% of the single respondents reported that they were satisfied, compared to 45.8% of the married respondents.

Table 4.52  
Satisfaction with Self in Student/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Single</u>	<u>Married</u>	
Satisfied	6 (66.7)	11 (45.8)	17 ( 51.6)
Neutral	1 (11.1)	9 (37.6)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	2 (22.2)	2 ( 8.3)	4 ( 12.1)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.0)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

Table 4.53  
Academic Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relations  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction with Number of Peers</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Single</u>	<u>Married</u>	
Six or more	2 (22.2)	4 (16.7)	6 ( 18.2)
Four or five	1 (11.1)	6 (25.0)	7 ( 21.2)
One to three	4 (44.5)	4 (16.7)	8 ( 24.2)
Did not respond	2 (22.2)	10 (41.6)	12 ( 36.4)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

According to the data, 63.6% of the respondents in the study reported that they had satisfactory relationships with at least one peer. Also 77.8% of the single respondents, compared to 58.4% of the married respondents, reported satisfying academic interaction with at least one peer (see Table 4.53). Twenty-two percent of the married respondents, compared to 11% of the single respondents, reported neutral academic relationships with at least one peer. In addition, 22% of the single respondents, compared to eight percent of the

married respondents, reported dissatisfying academic relationships with at least one of their peers.

Data shown in Table 4.54 indicate that 69.7% of the respondents in the study reported satisfaction in their intellectual interaction with peers. Of those who reported, 77.8% were single respondents and 66.7% were married. Among those reporting neutral interaction with peers, 33% were single and 12% were married. Of the few respondents who reported dissatisfying intellectual interaction with peers, 11% were single and 4% were married.

Table 4.54  
Intellectual Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with  
Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Marital Status		Totals
	Single	Married	
Six or more	1 (11.1)	3 (12.5)	4 ( 12.1)
Four or five	2 (22.2)	3 (12.5)	5 ( 15.2)
One to three	4 (44.5)	10 (41.7)	14 ( 42.4)
Did not respond	2 (22.2)	8 (33.3)	10 ( 30.3)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

Of all respondents, 66.7% reported that they experienced satisfying social interactions with their peers (see Table 4.55). Comparison by marital status showed that 77.8% were single respondents and 62.5% were married. Similar percentages of the married respondents (20%) and single respondents (22%) reported neutral social interaction with at least one peer. Only 12% of the married respondents, compared to none of the single respondents, reported dissatisfying social interaction with at least one peer.

Table 4.55

Social Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships

(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Numbers of Peers	Marital Status		Totals
	Single	Married	
Six or more	1 (11.1)	7 (29.2)	8 ( 24.3)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 8.3)	2 ( 6.0)
One to three	6 (66.7)	6 (25.0)	12 ( 36.4)
Did not respond	2 (22.2)	9 (39.5)	11 ( 33.3)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

According to the data, 69.7% of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with their financial aid (see Table 4.56). Furthermore, 77.8% of the single respondents, compared to 66.7% of the married respondents, reported that they were satisfied.

Table 4.56

Adequacy of Financial Aid

(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction	Marital Status		Totals
	Single	Married	
Satisfied	7 (77.8)	16 (66.7)	23 ( 69.7)
Neutral	2 (22.2)	2 ( 8.3)	4 ( 12.1)
Dissatisfied	0 ( 0.0)	5 (20.8)	5 ( 15.2)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 4.2)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	9 (27.3)	24 (72.7)	33 (100.0)

### Ethnic Groups

The socio-demographic variable ethnicity (minority-Caucasian) was tested to determine if a relationship existed between it and students' level of satisfaction with the graduate education program variables.

Table 4.57  
 Minority and Caucasian by Level of Satisfaction with a Stressfree  
 Graduate Education Program Environment  
 (Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minority</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	
Satisfied	6 (50.0)	10 (47.6)	16 ( 48.5)
Neutral	1 ( 8.5)	3 (14.3)	4 ( 12.1)
Dissatisfied	1 ( 8.5)	2 ( 9.5)	3 ( 9.1)
Other	4 (33.0)	6 (28.6)	10 ( 30.3)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

The data in Table 4.57 show that 48.5% of the respondents in the study were satisfied with the graduate education program environment and considered it stressfree. However, 30.3% of the respondents felt that the categories listed did not adequately represent their experience; therefore, the comments of these respondents are summarized by ethnic group.

#### Minority Respondents

- partially supportive with a stressful program environment
- trial and error supportive environment with a lot of stress
- being a single parent working full time, instructors have been very supportive
- a supportive graduate education program environment--is there such a thing?

#### Caucasian Respondents

- I have found the program to be supportive, but far from stressfree
- very supportive advisor who gave me good advice
- supportive with some stress, especially during the dissertation writing phase
- my graduate education was not stressfree
- I perceived a great deal of stress in myself and in my peers
- nothing in life, my dear, is entirely stressfree

Table 4.58  
Supportive Learning Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minority</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	
Satisfied	7 (58.3)	12 (56.7)	19 ( 57.6)
Neutral	3 (25.0)	7 (33.3)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	1 ( 8.3)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Did not respond	1 ( 8.3)	2 (10.0)	3 ( 9.1)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

More than one-half of the respondents (57.6%) reported that they were satisfied with the learning environment and deemed it supportive (see Table 4.58). Approximately the same percentages held for minority and Caucasian respondents.

Table 4.59  
Self-Esteem Building Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minority</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	
Satisfied	7 (58.3)	8 (38.1)	15 ( 45.4)
Neutral	2 (16.7)	8 (38.1)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	2 (16.7)	4 (19.0)	6 ( 18.2)
Did not respond	1 ( 8.3)	1 ( 4.8)	2 ( 6.1)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

Table 4.59 shows that, based on the data, 45.4% of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with the graduate education program environment and considered it self-esteem building. However, 58.3% of the minority respondents, compared to 38.1% of the Caucasian respondents, reported that they were satisfied with the learning environment.

Table 4.60  
Satisfaction with Self in Faculty/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minority</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	
Satisfied	10 (83.3)	19 (90.0)	29 ( 88.0)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)
Dissatisfied	2 (16.7)	1 ( 5.0)	3 ( 9.0)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 5.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

The data in Table 4.60 show that 88% of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with themselves in their faculty/student relationships. Minority and Caucasian percentages were similar.

Table 4.61a  
Academic Interaction with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members</u>	<u>Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minority</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	
Six or more	4 (33.3)	5 (23.9)	9 ( 27.3)
Four or five	3 (25.0)	7 (33.3)	10 ( 30.3)
One to three	5 (41.7)	8 (38.0)	13 ( 39.4)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 4.8)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

Ninety-seven percent of the respondents in the study indicated that they were satisfied in their academic relationships with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.61a). In addition, all the minority respondents, compared to 95.2% of the Caucasian respondents, reported satisfying academic relationships with at least one faculty member.

Table 4.61b  
Academic Interaction with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with  
Negative Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Dissatisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Status		Totals
	Minority	Caucasian	
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 4.8)	1 ( 3.0)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 9.6)	2 ( 6.1)
One to three	6 (50.0)	9 (42.8)	15 ( 45.4)
Did not respond	6 (50.0)	9 (42.8)	15 ( 45.4)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

Data in Table 4.61b show 54.5% of the respondents in the study reported that they were dissatisfied in their academic relationships with at least one faculty member. Of the respondents who reported, 57.2% were Caucasian, compared to 50% of the minority respondents. A large percentage of respondents (45.4%) did not answer this question.

Table 4.62  
Task/Professional Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Status		Totals
	Minority	Caucasian	
Six or more	2 (16.7)	5 (23.8)	7 ( 21.3)
Four or five	3 (25.0)	5 (23.8)	8 ( 24.2)
One to three	6 (50.0)	8 (38.1)	14 ( 42.4)
Did not respond	1 ( 8.3)	3 (14.3)	4 ( 12.1)
Totals	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

Of the respondents in the study, 87.9% reported that they were satisfied in their task/professional relationships with faculty members (see Table 4.62). In addition, 91.7% of the minority respondents compared to 85.7% of the Caucasian respondents reported satisfying relationships with faculty members. Seventy-six percent of the respondents did not report neutral task/professional relationships with faculty members. Of those who reported, 28% were Caucasian and 16%

were minority group respondents. Twenty-four percent of the Caucasian respondents, compared to none of the minority group respondents, reported dissatisfying task/professional relationships with faculty members.

Table 4.63

Social Interaction with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Status		Totals
	Minority	Caucasian	
Six or more	2 (16.7)	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 6.1)
Four or five	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 4.8)	1 ( 3.0)
One to three	7 (58.3)	9 (42.9)	16 ( 48.5)
Did not respond	3 (25.0)	11 (52.3)	14 ( 42.5)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

Data in Table 4.63 show 57.6% of the respondents in the study indicated that they experienced satisfying social interaction with at least one faculty member. However, 75% of the minority group respondents, compared to only 47.7% of the Caucasian respondents, reported satisfaction. More than 70% of the respondents did not report neutral social interactions with faculty members. Of those who reported, 38% were Caucasian respondents and 25% were minority group respondents. Thirty-three percent of the minority group respondents, compared to 24% of the Caucasian respondents, reported dissatisfying social interactions with at least one member of the faculty.

Table 4.64

Satisfaction with Self in Student/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction	Status		Totals
	Minority	Caucasian	
Satisfied	10 (83.3)	10 (47.6)	20 ( 61.0)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	9 (42.9)	9 ( 27.2)
Dissatisfied	2 (16.7)	2 ( 9.5)	4 ( 12.1)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)



Sixty-one percent of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with themselves in their student/student relationships (see Table 4.64). However, 83.3% of the minority group respondents, compared to only 47.6% of the Caucasian respondents, reported that they were satisfied with themselves in these relationships.

Analysis of the responses shown in Table 4.65 showed that 63.6% reported that they were satisfied in their relationships with at least one of their peers. However, 75% of the minority group respondents, compared to 57.1% of the Caucasian respondents, reported satisfaction with peers. Twenty-five percent of the minority group respondents, compared to 14% of the Caucasian respondents, reported neutral academic interactions with at least one peer. In addition, 19% of the Caucasian respondents, compared to none of the minority respondents, reported dissatisfying academic interaction with at least one peer.

Table 4.65  
Academic Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	<u>Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minority</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	
Six or more	1 ( 8.4)	5 (23.8)	6 ( 18.2)
Four or five	4 (33.3)	3 (14.3)	7 ( 21.2)
One to three	4 (33.3)	4 (19.0)	8 ( 24.2)
Did not respond	3 (25.0)	9 (42.9)	12 ( 36.4)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

Table 4.66  
Intellectual Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with  
Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Status		Totals
	Minority	Caucasian	
Six or more	2 (16.7)	3 (14.3)	5 ( 15.2)
Four or five	1 ( 8.3)	4 (19.0)	5 ( 15.2)
One to three	9 (75.0)	6 (28.6)	15 ( 45.4)
Did not respond	0 ( 0.0)	8 (38.1)	8 ( 24.2)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

According to the data, 75.8% of all the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied in their intellectual interaction with at least one peer (see Table 4.66). All of the minority group respondents, compared to 61.9% of the Caucasian respondents reported satisfying intellectual interactions with at least one peer. Twenty-five percent of the minority respondents, compared to 14% of the Caucasian respondents, reported neutral intellectual interaction with peers. Also, 9.6% of the Caucasian respondents, compared to none of the minority group respondents, reported that they experienced dissatisfying intellectual interactions with at least one peer.

Table 4.67  
Social Interaction with Peers--Level of Satisfaction with Positive  
Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Status		Totals
	Minority	Caucasian	
Six or more	3 (25.0)	5 (23.8)	8 ( 24.2)
Four or five	1 ( 8.3)	1 ( 4.8)	2 ( 6.1)
One to three	5 (41.7)	7 (33.3)	12 ( 36.4)
Did not respond	3 (25.0)	8 (38.1)	11 ( 33.3)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

Of the respondents in the study, 66.7% reported that they experienced satisfying social interaction with their peers (see Table 4.67). Seventy-five percent of the minority group respondents reported that they were satisfied in their social interactions with at least one peer compared to 61.9% of the Caucasian respondents. Respondents reported very few neutral interactions with their peers. Of those who reported neutral social interactions, 23% were Caucasian, compared to 16% of the minority group respondents. In addition, 16% of the minority group respondents, compared to nine percent of the Caucasian respondents, reported dissatisfying social interactions with at least one peer.

Table 4.68  
Adequacy of Financial Aid by Level of Satisfaction  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Status</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>Minority</u>	<u>Caucasian</u>	
Satisfied	10 (83.4)	13 (62.0)	23 ( 69.7)
Neutral	1 ( 8.3)	3 (14.2)	4 ( 12.1)
Dissatisfied	0 ( 0.0)	5 (23.8)	5 ( 15.2)
Did not respond	1 ( 8.3)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	12 (36.3)	21 (63.7)	33 (100.0)

Table 4.68 shows that 69.7% of the respondents in the study reported that their financial aid was adequate and that they were satisfied. Also, 83.4% of the minority respondents, compared to 62% of the Caucasian respondents, reported that they were satisfied with their financial aid.

### Nationality

The socio-demographic variable nationality was tested to determine if a relationship existed between it and students' satisfaction with the graduate education program variables. Results in Table 4.69 showed 48.5% of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with the graduate

education program environment and that they considered it stressfree. In addition, 62.5% of the international students, compared to 40% of the U.S. students, reported that they were satisfied. Also 30.3% of the respondents reported their experiences with the graduate education program environment in the category labeled "other." Their comments are listed according to whether they are U.S. students or international students.

Table 4.69  
Nationality by Level of Satisfaction with a Stressfree Graduate Education Program Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Nationality</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>International</u>	
Satisfied	10 (40.0)	5 (62.5)	16 ( 48.5)
Neutral	3 (12.0)	1 (12.5)	4 ( 12.1)
Dissatisfied	3 (12.0)	1 (12.5)	4 ( 12.1)
Other	9 (36.0)	1 (12.5)	10 ( 30.3)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

#### U.S. Respondents

- trial and error supportive environment with a lot of stress
- I have found the program to be supportive, but far from stressfree
- partially supportive with a stressful program environment
- a very supportive advisor who gave me good advice
- being a single parent working full time, instructors have been very supportive
- my graduate education was not stressfree
- supportive with some stress, especially during the dissertation writing phase
- nothing in life, my dear, is entirely stressfree, including completing your questionnaire
- I perceived a great deal of stress, both in myself and in my peers; the departmental environment was very stressful

#### International Respondent

- a supportive graduate education program--is there such a thing?

As displayed in Table 4.70, 57.6% of all respondents reported that they were satisfied with the learning environment and deemed it supportive. In addition, 87.5% of the international students, compared to 40% of the U.S. students, reported that they were satisfied.

Table 4.70  
Supportive Learning Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Nationality</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>International</u>	
Satisfied	12 (48.0)	7 (87.5)	19 ( 57.6)
Neutral	9 (36.0)	1 (12.5)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	1 ( 4.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Did not respond	3 (12.0)	0 ( 0.0)	3 ( 9.1)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

Of the respondents in the study, 51.5% reported that they were satisfied with the graduate education program environment and deemed it self-esteem building (see Table 4.71). Also, 87.5% of the international students, compared to 40% of the U.S. students, reported that they were satisfied.

Table 4.71  
Self-Esteem Building Environment  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Nationality</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>International</u>	
Satisfied	10 (40.0)	7 (87.5)	17 ( 51.5)
Neutral	9 (36.0)	1 (12.5)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	4 (16.0)	0 ( 0.0)	4 ( 12.1)
Did not respond	2 ( 8.0)	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 6.1)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

Based on the data, 87.9% of the respondents in the study reported that they were satisfied with themselves in their faculty/student relationships (see Table 4.72). Interestingly, all the international students, compared to 84% of the U.S. students, reported that they were satisfied.

Table 4.72  
Satisfaction with Self in Faculty/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Nationality</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>International</u>	
Satisfied	21 (84.0)	8 (100.0)	29 ( 87.9)
Neutral	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)	0 ( 0.0)
Dissatisfied	3 (12.0)	0 ( 0.0)	3 ( 9.1)
Did not respond	1 ( 4.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 ( 24.2)	33 (100.0)

Ninety-seven percent of all respondents in the study reported satisfaction in their academic relationship with members of the faculty. Ninety-six percent of the U.S. respondents, compared to all the international respondents, reported that they were satisfied with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.73a).

Table 4.73a  
Academic Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members</u>	<u>Nationality</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>International</u>	
Six or more	6 (24.0)	3 (37.5)	9 ( 27.3)
Four or five	10 (40.0)	0 ( 0.0)	10 ( 33.3)
One to three	8 (32.0)	5 (62.5)	13 ( 39.4)
Did not respond	1 ( 4.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

Of the respondents in the study, 39.4% reported dissatisfying academic relationships with at least one member of the faculty. Over 60/% of the sample did not respond to this question (see Table 4.73b).

Table 4.73b

Academic Relationships with Faculty Members--Level of Satisfaction with Negative Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Dissatisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Nationality		Totals
	U.S.	International	
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	1 (12.5)	1 ( 3.0)
Four or five	2 ( 8.0)	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 6.1)
One to three	7 (28.0)	3 (37.5)	10 ( 30.3)
Did not respond	16 (64.0)	4 (50.0)	20 ( 60.6)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

Based on the data, 87.9% of the respondents in the study reported that they experienced satisfying task/professional relationships with at least one faculty member. Eighty-eight percent of the U.S. students, compared to 87.5% of the international students, reported satisfying task/professional relationships with at least one member of the faculty. Although fewer than 30% of all respondents reported neutral task/professional relationships with faculty members, 32% were U.S. students and 12.5% were international students. Thirty-two percent of the U.S. respondents, compared to 25% of the international respondents, reported dissatisfying task/professional relationships with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.74).

Table 4.74

Task/Professional Relationships with Faculty Members--Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Nationality		Totals
	U.S.	International	
Six or more	4 (16.0)	3 (37.5)	7 ( 21.2)
Four or five	8 (32.0)	0 ( 0.0)	8 ( 24.3)
One to three	10 (40.0)	4 (50.0)	14 ( 42.4)
Did not respond	3 (12.0)	1 (12.5)	4 ( 12.1)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

According to the data, 57.6% of the respondents in the study reported satisfying social interactions with at least one faculty member (see Table 4.75). Of the international students, 75%, as compared to 52% of the U.S. students, reported that they experienced satisfying social interactions with at least one member of the faculty. Of the respondents who reported neutral social interactions with members of the faculty, 25% were international students and 28% were U.S. students. In addition, 36% of the U.S. students, compared to 37.5% of the international students, reported that they experienced dissatisfying social interactions with at least one member of the faculty. Over 40% of the sample did not respond to this question.

Table 4.75

Social Interaction with Faculty Members--Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Faculty Members	Nationality		Totals
	U.S.	International	
Six or more	0 ( 0.0)	2 (25.0)	2 ( 6.1)
Four or five	1 ( 4.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
One to three	12 (48.0)	4 (50.0)	16 ( 48.5)
Did not respond	12 (48.0)	2 (25.0)	14 ( 42.4)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

Of the respondents in the study, 51.5% reported that they were satisfied with themselves in their student/student relationships (see Table 4.76). Responses of U.S. and international respondents were similar.



Table 4.76  
Satisfaction with Self in Student/Student Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Nationality</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>International</u>	
Satisfied	13 (52.0)	4 (50.0)	17 ( 51.5)
Neutral	8 (32.0)	2 (25.0)	10 ( 30.3)
Dissatisfied	2 ( 8.0)	2 (25.0)	4 ( 12.1)
Did not respond	2 ( 8.0)	0 ( 0.0)	2 ( 6.1)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

According to the data, 63.6% of all respondents reported that they were satisfied in their academic relationships with peers. Fewer than 20% of all respondents reported neutral academic relationships with their peers. Of those who reported, 12% were U.S. students and 37.5% were international students. Even fewer students reported dissatisfying academic interactions with peers. Of those who did, 12% were U.S. students and 12.5% were international students (see Table 4.77).

Table 4.77  
Academic Interaction with Peers--Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

<u>Satisfaction with Number of Peers</u>	<u>Nationality</u>		<u>Totals</u>
	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>International</u>	
Six or more	5 (20.0)	1 (12.5)	6 ( 18.2)
Four or five	4 (16.0)	3 (37.5)	7 ( 21.2)
One to three	7 (28.0)	1 (12.5)	8 ( 24.2)
Did not respond	9 (36.0)	3 (37.5)	12 ( 36.4)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

Of all respondents, 76.8% reported that they had experienced satisfying intellectual interaction with at least one peer (see Table 4.78). Seventy-six percent of the U.S. students, compared to 63.5% of the international students,

reported that they experienced satisfying intellectual interaction with at least one peer. Of those who reported neutral intellectual interaction with at least one peer, 12% were U.S. students and 37.5% were international students. In addition, eight percent of the U.S. respondents, compared to none of the international respondents, reported dissatisfying intellectual interactions with at least one peer.

Table 4.78  
Intellectual Interaction with Peers--Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Nationality		Totals
	U.S.	International	
Six or more	4 (16.0)	1 (12.5)	5 ( 15.2)
Four or five	4 (16.0)	1 (12.5)	5 ( 15.2)
One to three	11 (44.0)	3 (37.5)	14 ( 42.4)
Did not respond	6 (24.0)	3 (37.5)	9 ( 27.2)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

As evident from Table 4.79, data showed that 66.7% of all respondents reported that they had experienced satisfying social interactions with at least one peer. Sixty-eight percent of the U.S. respondents, compared to 62.5% of the international students, reported neutral social interactions with at least one peer. Also, 8% of U.S. respondents, compared to 25% of international respondents, reported dissatisfying social interactions with at least one peer.

Table 4.79  
Social Interactions with Peers--Satisfaction with Positive Relationships  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction with Number of Peers	Nationality		Totals
	U.S.	International	
Six or more	6 (24.0)	2 (25.0)	8 ( 24.2)
Four or five	1 ( 4.0)	1 (12.5)	2 ( 6.1)
One to three	10 (40.0)	2 (25.0)	12 ( 36.4)
Did not respond	8 (32.0)	3 (37.5)	11 ( 33.3)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.2)	33 (100.0)

Finally, on satisfaction with financial aid, 69.7% reported that their financial aid was adequate and that they were satisfied. In addition, 87.5% of the international respondents, compared to 64% of the U.S. respondents, reported satisfaction with their financial aid.

Table 4.80  
Adequacy of Financial Aid  
(Percentages are in parenthesis)

Satisfaction	Nationality		Totals
	U.S.	International	
Satisfied	16 (64.0)	7 (87.5)	23 ( 69.7)
Neutral	4 (16.0)	0 ( 0.0)	4 ( 12.1)
Dissatisfied	4 (16.0)	1 (12.5)	5 ( 15.2)
Did not respond	1 ( 4.0)	0 ( 0.0)	1 ( 3.0)
Totals:	25 (75.8)	8 (24.4)	33 (100.0)

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

#### Introduction

This chapter includes a summary of the study, conclusions that were drawn from the findings reported in Chapter IV, and recommendations for further study. The primary purpose of the study was an investigation of the factors that affect graduate students' academic progress in Educational Administration at Michigan State University. The literature review established that graduate students' satisfaction with graduate school influences persistence, retention, and students' academic progress.

#### Summary

The study was conducted in the spring of 1984 and focused on factors that affect graduate students' academic progress. The population used for the study was admitted to and subsequently enrolled in the Department of Educational Administration at MSU during academic year 1980-81. Seventy-six students met the criteria for inclusion in the study and were sent the questionnaire. Of the 76 potential respondents, 41 responded, and 33 of the returned questionnaires were usable.

Five variables were examined using data collected in the questionnaire to test for relationships between socio-demographic variables and satisfaction. These variables were: (a) academic progress (ten questions); (b) graduate education program (one question with three sections); (c) faculty/student relationships (one question with three sections); (d) student/student relationships

(one question with four sections); and (e) financial status of students (three questions).

Observation of the data showed that although the information on age and financial status was originally intended to be included to test for relationship with rate of progress, it was unusable because the distributions were too uneven. Most students were found to be in the same age group (over 30 years of age) and of similar financial status (middle income).

The two research questions that guided the study were:

1. Is students' rate of academic progress associated with their financial status, program area, gender, marital status, age, race, nationality, and students' perceptions of their graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, and student/student relationships?
2. Is there a relationship among the students' socio-demographic variables (financial status, program area, gender, marital status, age, race, nationality) and their satisfaction with the graduate education program, faculty/student relationships, and student/student relationships?

### The Findings

The researcher tested academic progress and students' socio-demographic variables to determine what relationships, if any, existed between them. In addition, the graduate students' satisfaction with program environment variables was tested against their academic progress to determine if a relationship existed between them. Individual socio-demographic variables were also examined in light of student satisfaction with the graduate program variables to determine what relationships, if any, existed between them.

Analysis of the data collected from this descriptive study provided the basis for the following findings.

1. Rate of academic progress was not associated with any of the socio-demographic variables. However, it was found to be associated with:

- stressfree graduate education program environment
- self-esteem building environment
- students' satisfaction with their faculty/student relationships
- task/professional relationships with faculty members
- social interaction with faculty members
- students' satisfaction with their student/student relationships
- academic relationships with peers
- intellectual interaction with peers
- social interaction with peers
- adequacy of financial aid

Also, the rate of academic progress was not associated with the following:

- supportive learning environment
- academic relationships with faculty members

2. A relationship was established between program area and students' level of satisfaction with:

- stressfree graduate education program environment
- supportive learning environment
- self-esteem building environment
- students' satisfaction with themselves in faculty/student relationships

However, there was no relationship between program area and:

- academic relationships with faculty members
- task/professional relationships with faculty members
- social interaction with faculty members
- satisfaction with their student/student relationships

- academic relationships with peers
- intellectual interaction with peers
- social interactions with peers
- adequacy of financial aid

3. A relationship was found to exist between gender and students' level of satisfaction with:

- their faculty/student relationships
- their student/student relationships
- their intellectual interactions with peers

However, there was no relationship between gender and students' level of satisfaction with:

- stressfree graduate education program environment
- supportive learning environment
- self-esteem building environment
- academic relationship with faculty members
- task/professional relationship with faculty members
- social interaction with faculty members
- academic relationship with peers
- social interaction with peers
- adequacy of financial aid

4. A relationship was found to exist between students' marital status and their level of satisfaction with:

- stressfree graduate education program environment
- social interaction with faculty members
- their faculty/student relationships
- academic relationships with peers

However, there was no relationship between marital status and:

- supportive learning environment
- self-esteem building environment
- their student/student relationships
- academic relationships with peers
- task/professional relationships with faculty members
- intellectual interaction with peers
- social interactions with peers
- adequacy of financial aid

5. A relationship was established between students' ethnic group and their level of satisfaction with:

- self-esteem building environment
- social interaction with faculty members
- their student/student relationships
- academic relationships with peers
- intellectual interaction with peers
- adequacy of financial aid

However, there was no relationship between students' ethnic group and their level of satisfaction with:

- stressfree graduate education program environment
- supportive learning environment
- their faculty/student relationships
- academic relationships with faculty members
- task/professional relationships with faculty members
- social interactions with peers

6. A relationship was found between students' nationality (U.S. or international) and their level of satisfaction with:



- stressfree graduate education program environment
- supportive learning environment
- self-esteem building environment
- social interaction with faculty members
- adequacy of financial aid

However, relationship was found between students' nationality and their level of satisfaction with their:

- faculty/student relationships
- academic relationships with faculty members
- task/professional relationships with faculty members
- student/student relationships
- academic interaction with peers
- intellectual interaction with peers
- social interaction with peers

### Conclusions\* and Discussion

#### Stress Versus Academic Progress

\* Seventy-five percent of the respondents making good or excellent academic progress reported experiencing stress.

\* Students making minimum academic progress did not report experiencing stress.

#### Discussion

This finding may be due partly to respondents' willingness to accept that to be productive, they have to experience some stress. Selye (1974) established that

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\*In this section, conclusions drawn from analyses of survey data are designated by an asterisk. Because analyses yielded findings in several categories which were cross-tabulated for further analysis, conclusions are grouped in sections whose headings identify the variables compared. Discussion follows each set of related conclusions.

stress had to be present for an individual to be productive. Therefore, it is not surprising that graduate students are not immune.

### Satisfaction Versus Learning Environment

#### Satisfaction Versus Faculty/Student Relationships

- \* Graduate students reported satisfaction with themselves regardless of their relationship with faculty members.

- \* Graduate students making good and excellent academic progress experienced more task/professional relations with faculty members than did students making minimum progress.

- \* Graduate students making minimum academic progress reported fewer social interactions with faculty members, compared to graduate students in the other two categories of progress.

- \* Most of the graduate students reported experiencing satisfactory academic relationships with at least one faculty member.

#### Satisfaction Versus Student/Student Relationships

- \* Graduate students were satisfied with themselves regardless of their perceptions of the relationships between themselves and their peers.

- \* Graduate students making excellent progress reported a lower level of satisfaction with peer relations than respondents in the other two categories.

- \* Graduate students making excellent academic progress reported more satisfying academic relationships with their peers than those who made less progress.

- \* Graduate students making good or excellent academic progress reported satisfying intellectual interactions with their peers.

- \* Fewer graduate students making minimum academic progress reported satisfying social interactions with their peers than the other two categories.

### Satisfaction Versus Financial Aid

- \* Seventy percent of the graduate students reported that their financial aid was adequate and they were satisfied.

- \* Graduate students making excellent academic progress reported the least satisfaction with financial resources.

### Satisfaction Versus Learning Environment

- \* There was no correlation between graduate students' satisfaction with academic relationships with faculty members and their satisfaction with the learning environment.

- \* Most graduate students reported satisfaction with the learning environment.

### Satisfaction Versus Program Area

- \* Graduate students enrolled in CUA consistently reported a higher level of satisfaction, compared to the other two program areas.

- \* Graduate students' program area had more of an impact on their satisfaction with the graduate education program environment than their level of satisfaction with either faculty/student or student/student relationships.

- \* Most CUA and K-12 respondents reported being satisfied with their lives; 66.7% of the ACE respondents were dissatisfied.

### Discussion

The finding that students making good or excellent academic progress experienced more task/professional relationships with faculty members than those making minimum progress is consistent with previous research showing that students who publish and perform other task-related activities with faculty members tend to be more satisfied and progress more rapidly to degree

completion (Bargar & Duncan, 1982; Bowen & Kilman, 1975; Burrell, 1979; Schmidt & Sedlacek, 1972). This type of activity enables graduate students to build and strengthen their self-confidence. In addition, it lays the groundwork for positive professional relationships with faculty members while the students are in graduate school and association as colleagues once the students complete their doctorates and enter the profession. Task-related projects between faculty members and students may also help establish social interaction between them.

The relatively lower level of satisfaction with peer relations reported by students who made excellent progress may have unintentionally reflected their excellent progress more than their relationships with other graduate students. Many of the respondents in the excellent category of progress had completed their degrees and, as graduates, were removed geographically, socially, and psychologically from the student/student relationships that characterized their graduate study.

Divided by program, only 9.1% of the graduate students in the study were enrolled in Adult and Continuing Education (ACE), 54.5% in College and University Administration (CUA), and 36.4% in K-12 Administration (K-12). Most of the analysis focused on CUA and K-12 respondents because their percentages were larger than that of ACE and more meaningful discussion could be conducted.

The program area, as well as campus relationships, is a major element of the atmosphere in which student learning takes place. If students are satisfied with their programs, They will tend to be satisfied with other aspects of graduate education. In this study, CUA graduate students consistently reported a higher level of satisfaction than students in the other two program areas. Also, a program may attract a particular type of student. It is suggested that CUA respondents may have found satisfaction in the courses they were taking,

finding them conducive to meeting their long-term educational goals, and thus a supportive educational program.

The larger percentage of dissatisfaction expressed by ACE respondents may be due to the ACE program's much smaller representation in the research population than the CUA and K-12 programs. When groups that are very different in size are compared, one or two uncharacteristic responses can have a disproportionate effect if they occur in a much smaller group.

It appears that once graduate students are satisfied with their program area, the graduate education program environment, faculty/student, and student/student relationships, their financial resources are not of major importance in providing desired satisfaction, although they play a very important role in the overall graduate study process.

#### Gender Versus Satisfaction

- \* Gender did not have an impact on satisfaction with the graduate education program environment, faculty/student or student/student relationships, or financial aid.

- \* Both males and females experienced stress in their academic programs.

- \* All female graduate students reported satisfaction with themselves and with their relationships with faculty members.

- \* In student/student relationships, female respondents reported a higher level of satisfaction than males in their academic and social interactions with peers.

- \* Both female and male respondents were satisfied with their financial aid.

### Discussion

Of the respondents, 60.6% were male and 39.4% were female. Since females are relative newcomers to graduate study, more specifically to Ph.D. study, compared to male respondents, the challenge of being newer and fewer in numbers may have contributed to female students' satisfaction with the graduate education program environment, faculty/student and student/student relationships, and availability of financial aid. The challenge of being newer and fewer may have enabled female graduate students to cope as effectively as male graduate students in graduate school.

Both female and male graduate students felt they had sufficient access to academic, task/professional, and social interactions with members of the faculty, even though male respondents reported a higher level of satisfaction with task/professional and social interactions. This type of interaction between all groups may have contributed to breaking down barriers between female and male students in graduate school.

The graduate education program environment may have provided a conducive atmosphere where female students, although few in graduate school compared to males, had the opportunity to interact with faculty members and student peers. Interaction of this nature may have aided in building of self-confidence which, in turn, enabled graduate students to achieve their ultimate goals. Relationships with peers thus may have been instrumental in providing a positive environment for students to succeed in graduate school.

Respondents in this study seemed to be generally satisfied with financial aid. Berg and Faber (1983) said that if financial aid is available to graduate students, financial frustrations can be greatly minimized. Although this study did not directly address whether respondents were employed full-time or part-time, or were full-time students, 90% of them were employed full-time and

attended classes part-time, which may have accounted for their overall satisfaction with financial aid. It is also possible that the graduate students' satisfaction with their financial resources may have contributed to overall satisfaction with the graduate education program.

#### Marital Status Versus Satisfaction

- \* Married students, as compared to single students, reported a higher level of satisfaction with the graduate program environment as being supportive and self-esteem building.

- \* Single students reported higher satisfaction with a stressfree graduate education program environment, faculty/student and student/student relationships, and adequacy of financial aid, compared to married students.

- \* Fewer than 50% of the single students reported satisfaction with the learning environment as being supportive and self-esteem building.

#### Discussion

Over 72% of the respondents in this study were married, a finding which was consistent with expectations. DeStigter (1983) and other researchers found that married students attend graduate school in larger numbers than single students, perhaps because some receive necessary support from their spouses and other family members. In some cases, these support mechanisms are not available to single students.

As to self-esteem building, it is possible that single students may have enrolled in the graduate program for the intellectual challenge rather than for building their self-esteem and the support that such a program offers. Single students were also more satisfied with faculty/student and student/student relationships than married students.

Single graduate students may be more flexible in the management of their time than married students, whose extra time outside classes and study may have to be spent with spouse, offspring, and possibly work. In essence, single students may not have to be concerned about anyone else other than themselves, while married students have their families to consider before utilizing time spent on building relationships.

As to financial aid, it can be argued that married students may have to prioritize how available financial resources will be spent, between family needs and graduate study, while single students may not be faced with those types of decisions.

#### Ethnicity Versus Satisfaction

- \* Graduate student ethnicity had a more positive impact on student/student relationships than on the graduate education program environment.

- \* Minority graduate students, more than Caucasians, reported that they experienced a high level of satisfying relationships both with faculty members and with peers.

#### Discussion

Caucasian respondents comprised 63.7% of all respondents, while minority students accounted for 36.3%. It is interesting that minority respondents consistently reported a higher level of satisfaction with the overall graduate program, except in students' satisfaction with themselves. This is the only variable in which Caucasian respondents reported a higher level of satisfaction than minority group students. Minority graduate students were much more satisfied with their relationships with faculty members and peers than were



Caucasians. Apparently, these types of relationships were a positive factor in minority group students' adjustment to their graduate study.

Minority students are relative newcomers to graduate study. Their high level of satisfaction is encouraging because only in the last two decades has a large number of minority students had the opportunity to participate in graduate study. In most cases, although Caucasian students were generally satisfied with the graduate education program, their satisfaction was not as great as that of minority group students. Caucasian students, especially males, have long had access to graduate education, but there seems to be a special enthusiasm for the graduate experience among minority students and women, for whom the experience represents new opportunities.

Graduate students, in general, were satisfied with the financial aid available to them. Minority students also reported a higher level of satisfaction in this area. Graduate students' relative freedom from financial worries may have contributed to their overall level of satisfaction with the graduate program.

#### Nationality Versus Satisfaction

- \* International students reported a higher level of satisfaction with the graduate education program than U.S. students.

- \* U.S. and international students were similar in their satisfaction with task/professional relationships with faculty members and academic relationships with peers.

#### Discussion

Graduate students from the United States comprised 75.8% of the respondents in the study, while international students accounted for 24.2%. Only in intellectual and social interactions with peers did U.S. students report a higher level of satisfaction than international students. Nationality had a greater

impact on satisfaction with the graduate education program environment than on satisfaction with faculty/student or student/student relationships. The high level of satisfaction expressed by international students with the graduate education program may be due, in part, to the students' overall enthusiasm for the opportunity to study abroad for (a) technical advancement, (b) exposure to other educational systems of research, (c) professional advancement, and (d) personal ambitions.

In terms of advanced technological training, many developing countries lack both the machinery and trained manpower to provide the skills necessary to a technologically changing world. Their scholars must seek training elsewhere because programs are not available in their home countries.

For doctoral students in Educational Administration, the United States has some of the leading institutions and facilities for training in educational research systems. This is probably one reason why international students come to the United States to study.

In another vein, international students may have elected to study in the United States because of the socio-cultural experience. While some international students are fully sponsored when they study abroad, others make great sacrifice to obtain the benefits that can be gained from studying in another country. Those who are sponsored apparently have adequate resources, because international students also reported a higher level of satisfaction with their financial aid, compared to U.S. students.

It is possible that the high level of satisfaction reported by international students may reflect their enthusiasm for advantages provided not only by graduate study, but also by the opportunity to travel abroad for this study, such as increased knowledge of advanced technology, other educational systems of

research, socio-cultural exposure, and the advancement of personal ambitions and self-esteem.

Although U.S. students were generally satisfied, they were not on travel abroad for specific educational purposes. This extra motivation may have accounted for the reasons why international students reported higher levels of satisfaction than did U.S. students.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study suggest some areas for further investigation into the factors that affect graduate students' academic progress in Educational Administration. The following are some questions on which future research might focus.

1. Is the high rate of satisfaction reported by graduate students attributable to congruence between their expectations of the graduate education environment and their experiences within it, or is their satisfaction a result of their ability to get admitted to established graduate programs?
2. Why did female, single, minority, and international students--consistently report higher levels of satisfaction with the graduate education program than, respectively, male, married, Caucasian, and U.S. students?
3. What are the factors that affect graduate students' academic progress at other institutions with similar programs?

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION AND CURRICULUM  
ERICKSON HALL

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1034

June 5, 1984

Dear Colleague:

We are presently researching "The Factors That Affect Graduate Students' Academic Progress In The Department Of Educational Administration And Curriculum At Michigan State University." The results of this research will help to fulfill the requirements for my Ph.D. degree. We are requesting your help in providing the much needed information.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are free to discontinue at any time without recrimination. However, your cooperation in this study will provide information which may be used to aid in solving problems and improving graduate student life for you and others in Educational Administration and Curriculum. Your opinion and suggestions are important to the study.

The questionnaire will be completely anonymous; on request, results of the study will be made available to you.

Any information given is strictly confidential and will be treated with greatest respect. Please take 10 to 15 minutes to answer this questionnaire to the best of your ability.

Your assistance and cooperation in completing this questionnaire is greatly appreciated. Please return this by June 20, 1984. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Pauline O. Peart*  
Pauline O. Peart  
(Graduate Student)

*Howard Hickey*  
Dr. Howard Hickey  
(Advisor and Committee Chairperson).

## QUESTIONNAIRE ON GRADUATE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Please circle the appropriate response.

1. Circle the letter that corresponds to the program you are currently enrolled in:
  - A. Adult and Continuing Education
  - B. College Student Personnel
  - C. College and University Administration (Higher Education)
  - D. K-12 Administration
2. What is your gender?
  - A. Female
  - B. Male
3. What is your present marital status?
  - A. Single
  - B. Married
  - C. Previously married
4. Under which age group do you fall?
  - A. 30 or younger
  - B. 31 or older
5. Of which group do you consider yourself to be a member?
  - A. Black
  - B. Caucasian
  - C. Hispanic
  - D. Native American
  - E. Oriental
  - F. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)

6. What is your nationality?
  - A. American
  - B. Foreign \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify country of origin)
7. In which quarter were you admitted to your program of study during the academic year 1980-81?
  - A. Fall 1980
  - B. Winter 1981
  - C. Spring 1981
  - D. Summer 1981
8. Have you completed your doctoral degree?
  - A. Yes
  - B. No
9. If your answer is yes, when did you complete it?
 

Quarter \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ (If you have completed your degree, go on to question #18.)
10. How far have you progressed in your doctoral studies? (Include only credits on your program plan; see attached description of "Report of the Guidance Committee-Doctoral Program" to refresh your memory of the document I am referring to. Do not include 999 credits.)
  - A. What percent of your course work did you complete in the first two years of your study? \_\_\_\_\_ (Do not include 999 credits.)
  - B. What percentage is now now complete? \_\_\_\_\_ (Do not include 999 credits.)
  - C. In which year and quarter did you form your guidance committee?
 

Quarter \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ (See attached "Committee Membership Form" to refresh your memory of the document I am referring to.)
  - D. In what quarter and year did you present your "Statement of Educational Goals"? Quarter \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
  - E. How many credits did you and your committee arrive at as the required number of credits for your program? \_\_\_\_\_ (Do not include 999 credits.)
  - F. How many credits are there remaining to complete in your program? \_\_\_\_\_ (Do not include 999 credits.)



11. What is your grade point average? (Please circle the letter that corresponds with your answer.)
- A. Below 3.0
  - B. 3.0 to 3.495
  - C. 3.5 to 4.0
12. Have you completed your comprehensive examination?
- A. Yes
  - B. No
13. Did you pass or fail your comprehensive examination?
- A. Passed                      Quarter \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. Failed
14. Have you completed your research proposal?
- A. Yes
  - B. No
15. If your answer to number 14 is yes, has it been approved or rejected? (See attached description of "Proposal Approval Form" to refresh your memory of the document I am referring to.)
- A. Approved                      Quarter \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. Rejected
16. Looking at where you are academically, do you consider yourself to be progressing towards your degree completion?
- A. Yes
  - B. No
17. In which quarter and year do you plan to complete your degree? Quarter \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate Experience

In the pursuit of your graduate studies, some factors more than others have played significant roles in your academic progress towards your degree completion. A strongly supportive graduate education program environment may be the key factor to graduate students' progress in educational administration. (Please indicate how your graduate education program environment has been by circling the number that best corresponds with your answer.)

18A.

1. A very supportive, stress-free graduate education program environment
2. A supportive, stress-free graduate education program environment
3. A neutral, stress-free graduate education program environment
4. A non-supportive stress-free graduate education program environment
5. A very non-supportive stress-free graduate education program environment
6. None of the above

If you chose number 6, please state why:

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18B.

1. A very supportive learning environment
2. A supportive learning environment
3. A neutral learning environment
4. A non-supportive learning environment
5. A very non-supportive learning environment

18C

1. A very supportive self-esteem building environment
2. A supportive self-esteem building environment
3. A neutral self-esteem building environment
4. A non-supportive esteem-building environment
5. A very non-supportive self-esteem building environment

Faculty/student relationship is regarded by most graduate students as the single most important aspect of the quality of their graduate experience. Unfortunately, many also report that it is the single most disappointing aspect of their graduate experience.

19A. In general do you consider yourself

1. Very satisfied with your life
2. Satisfied with your life
3. Neutral to life
4. Dissatisfied with your life
5. Very dissatisfied with your life

19B. For items 19B, C, and D, fill in all blanks.

Please indicate the number of faculty members with whom you have the following kinds of relationships in your department.

1. Very satisfying academic relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
2. Satisfying academic relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
3. Dissatisfying academic relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
4. Very dissatisfying academic relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty

19C.

1. Very satisfying task/professional interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
2. Satisfying task/professional interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
3. Neutral task/professional interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
4. Dissatisfying task/professional interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
5. Very dissatisfying task/professional interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty

19D.

1. Very satisfying social interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
2. Satisfying social interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
3. Neutral social interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
4. Dissatisfying social interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty
5. Very dissatisfying social interaction with # \_\_\_\_\_ faculty

In student/student relationships, intellectual stimulation of peers is found to be very important in the graduate experience. In addition, this relationship with each other brings fresh perspectives and insights important to the development of the academic community. (Answer one statement in 20A and as many statements as apply to your experience in 20B, C, and D.)

20A. Relative to student/student relationships, do you consider your self

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Neutral
4. Dissatisfied
5. Very dissatisfied

20B. Please indicate the number of graduate students with whom you have the following kinds of relationships in your department:

1. Very satisfying academic relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
2. Satisfying academic relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
3. Neutral academic relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
4. Dissatisfying academic relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
5. Very dissatisfying academic relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers

20C.

1. Very satisfying intellectual relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
2. Satisfying intellectual relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
3. Neutral intellectual relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
4. Dissatisfying intellectual relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
5. Very dissatisfying intellectual relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers

20D.

1. Very satisfying social relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
2. Satisfying social relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
3. Neutral social relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
4. Dissatisfying social relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers
5. Very dissatisfying social relationship with # \_\_\_\_\_ peers

It as been stated that graduate students lack the needed funds to defray the costs of graduate education. It has been cited as one of the most frequent reasons given by students for their dropping out of school. Graduate students' academic progress may largely depend on how adequate the financial resources available are able to meet their educational obligations. (Please indicate your source(s) of financial support by circling the appropriate letter that corresponds with your answer as well as the percentage of support corresponding to each source that applies to you.)

21.

- A. Fellowship: \_\_\_\_\_ %
- B. Assistantship \_\_\_\_\_ %
- C. Other employment \_\_\_\_\_ %
- D. GI benefits \_\_\_\_\_ %
- E. Student loan \_\_\_\_\_ %
- F. Spouse's income \_\_\_\_\_ %
- G. Parent or guardian's income \_\_\_\_\_ %
- H. Personal assets (savings, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ %

22. How adequate is your source(s) of financial support?

- A. Very adequate
- B. Adequate
- C. Neutral
- D. Inadequate
- E. Very inadequate

23. What is your socio-economic background?

- A. High socio-economic background
- B. Middle socio-economic background
- C. Low socio-economic background
- D. None of the above

If you answer D, please state why:

By completing this questionnaire, you have given your consent to participate in this study. Please be assured that all information will be kept in the strictest confidence. Should you need a copy of the results of this study, please place an "X" in the box provided below.

Please accept my heartfelt thanks for completing the questionnaire.

I would like a copy of the results of the study:

☐  
☐





Date \_\_\_\_\_

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ADVANCED GRADUATE STUDIES

College of Education

Guidance Committee Membership

Instructions to student: After consultation with your advisor and a list of tentative guidance committee members agreed upon, signatures of these other members should be obtained on this form. This will serve as official record of the willingness of the guidance committee members to serve.

Complete in quadruplicate: 1. Advisor  
2. Student Affairs Office  
3. Student  
4. Chairperson

The undersigned have consented to serve as members of the doctoral guidance committee for:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Student)

\_\_\_\_\_, Chairperson

Selection of a Guidance Committee

The following statement is taken from the booklet, Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities.

2.4.1. Guidance Committee. It shall be the responsibility of the student, in consultation with the department chairperson or designated representative, to form a guidance committee within his/her first three terms of doctoral study, or within three terms beyond the masters degree or its equivalent.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

SAO  
June 1983

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APPROVAL OF DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

To

Graduate Student Affairs Office

(To be submitted by doctoral  
student immediately following  
approval by his Guidance  
Committee.)

Title of the Dissertation (may be tentative but should be accurate and descriptive):

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Anticipated date of completion: \_\_\_\_\_

Date approved by Guidance Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's major field: \_\_\_\_\_

Student number: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print legibly)

Student's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Committee Members (Signatures required):

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date received in SAO \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

### FOLLOW-UP POSTCARD TO GRADUATE STUDENTS

Pauline O. Peart  
1535 D Spartan Village  
East Lansing, MI 48823  
July 1, 1984

Dear Colleague:

On June 5, 1984, I sent you a questionnaire concerning "The Factors That Affect Graduate Students' Academic Progress in the Department of Educational Administration at Michigan State University."

I am appealing to you to please complete the questionnaire and return it to me by July 14, 1984. Your response is very important for my study.

If you have already returned the questionnaire, please disregard this reminder. Thank you for your cooperation in this urgent request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pauline O. Peart".

Pauline O. Peart

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF APPROVAL FROM  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

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UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH INVOLVING  
HUMAN SUBJECTS (UCRIHS)  
238 ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
(517) 355-2186

EAST LANSING · MICHIGAN · 48824

May 31, 1984

Ms. Pauline O. Peart  
1535 D Spartan Village  
East Lansing, Michigan 48823

Dear Ms. Peart:

Subject: Proposal Entitled, "A Study of the Factors that Affect  
Graduate Students' Academic Progress in the Department  
of Educational Administration and Curriculum at  
Michigan State University"

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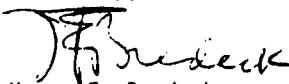
I am pleased to advise that I concur with your evaluation that this project is exempt from full UCRIHS review, and approval is herewith granted for conduct of the project.

You are reminded that UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year. If you plan to continue this project beyond one year, please make provisions for obtaining appropriate UCRIHS approval prior to May 31, 1985.

Any changes in procedures involving human subjects must be reviewed by the UCRIHS prior to initiation of the change. UCRIHS must also be notified promptly of any problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects during the course of the work.

Thank you for bringing this project to my attention. If I can be of any future help, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Sincerely,



Henry E. Bredeck  
Chairman, UCRIHS

HEB/jms

cc: Hickey

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