

Graduating Senior Survey 2015

Selected Results on Scholarly and Creative Activities

Office of Institutional Assessment | George Mason University
July 2016

The Graduating Senior Survey (GSS) was administered to 4,927 seniors in the 2015 academic year (summer and fall 2014, spring 2015), with a response rate of 43%. This document presents selected results related to scholarly and creative activities compared by transfer status. Complete GSS results are available at assessment.gmu.edu.

Awareness of *Students as Scholars*

- Transfer students reported a significantly lower level of awareness of the *Students as Scholars* initiative: about a quarter of respondents were very familiar or somewhat familiar with the initiative, compared to 39% of those who started college at Mason (Table 1).

Table 1. Familiarity with *Students as Scholars* by Transfer Status¹

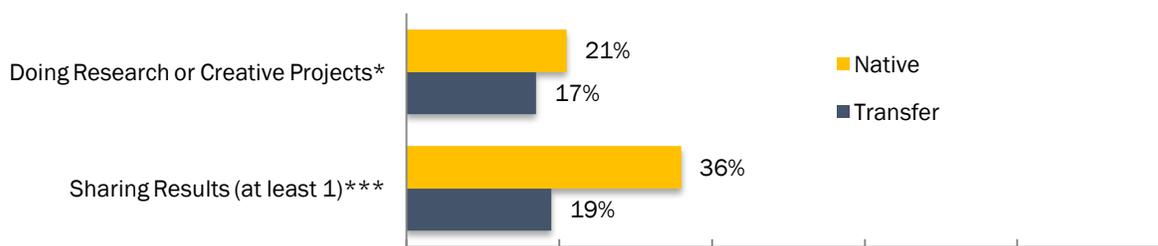
How familiar are you with the Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research (OSCAR) and/or the <i>Students as Scholars</i> Initiative?	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Too Familiar	Not At All Familiar
Native (n=820)	12%	27%	32%	29%
Transfer (n=1,172)	6%	20%	33%	41%

¹ Based on self-report data from GSS, respondents were identified as either native (started college at Mason) or transfer (started college elsewhere). Significant difference between native and transfer students at *** $p < .001$, Chi-square (2-sided).

Doing Research or Creative Projects

- Transfer students reported having done or planning to do research or creative projects with a faculty member outside of class at a significantly lower rate than native students (17% vs. 21%, Figure 1).
- 19% of transfer students have shared results of their research/creative projects outside of class in at least one forum, compared to 36% of their native counterparts (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Participation in Undergraduate Research by Transfer Status



For “doing research or creative projects”, $n=822$ and $1,170$ for native and transfer students, respectively. For “sharing results”, $n=794$ and $1,146$ for native and transfer students, respectively. Significant differences at * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$, Chi-square (2-sided).

Self-Reported Competence Contributed by Major

- Seniors who had done or planned to do research or creative activity/projects with a Mason faculty member outside of class reported a significantly higher level of contribution of the major to their competence in six of the 11 areas measured on the survey (Table 2).
- By transfer status, students who started elsewhere gave higher ratings than their native peers to the contribution of their majors to their competence in information technology and quantitative reasoning, whereas the reverse was true for the ability to work independently (Table 2).

Table 2. Contribution of Courses in the Major to Student Competency by Participation in Research and Transfer Status

Self-Reported Competence Contributed by Major	Have Done or Plan To Do Research/Creative Work			Transfer Status		
	Yes (n=365)	No (n=1,603)	Sig.	Native (n=819)	Transfer (n=1,163)	Sig.
In-depth knowledge in a particular field/major	3.71	3.67		3.69	3.68	
Ability to work in groups	3.36	3.27		3.32	3.31	
Ability to work independently	3.49	3.44		3.52	3.41	*
Problem-solving skills	3.50	3.39	*	3.45	3.44	
Creativity	3.22	3.07	**	3.12	3.17	
Global perspective	3.15	3.15		3.14	3.16	
Writing	3.40	3.29	*	3.33	3.36	
Oral communication	3.33	3.24		3.29	3.28	
Information technology	2.94	2.78	**	2.75	2.97	***
Quantitative reasoning	3.18	2.97	***	2.97	3.18	***
Scientific reasoning	3.22	2.89	***	3.00	3.11	

Numbers represent mean responses, with response options ranging from 1 (not at all) to 4 (a great deal). Significant main effects for "have done or plan to do research/creative work" $F(11, 1928) = 4.229, p < .001$, and transfer status $F(11, 1928) = 4.184, p < .001$, two-way MANOVA.

Student Satisfaction

- Seniors who have done or planned to do research or creative activity/projects with a Mason faculty member outside of class reported a significantly higher level of satisfaction on most of the measures than those who have not (Table 3).
- By transfer status, native students were more satisfied with their involvement in campus activities than those who started college elsewhere (Table 3).

Table 3. Satisfaction by Participation in Research and Transfer Status

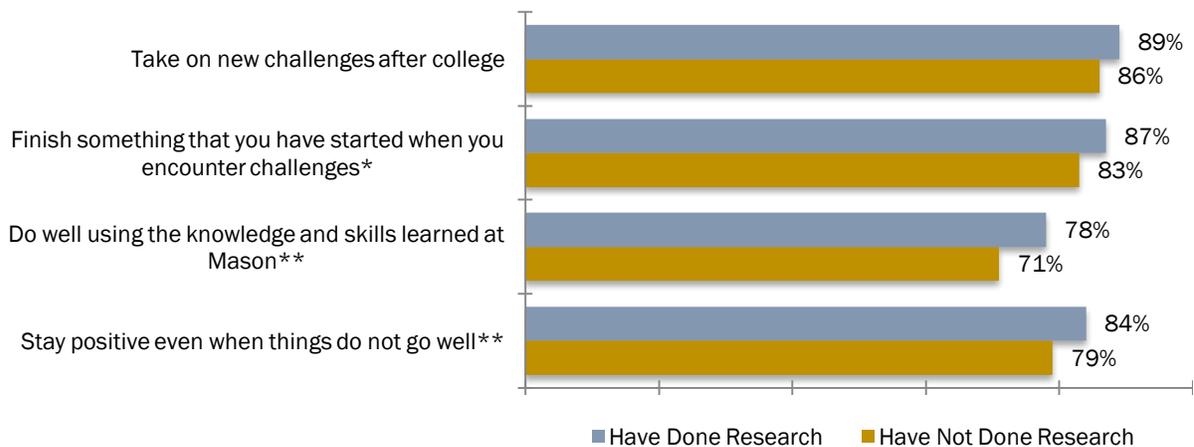
Self-Reported Competence Contributed by Major	Have Done or Plan To Do Research/Creative Work			Transfer Status		
	Yes (n=354)	No (n=1,590)	Sig.	Native (n=802)	Transfer (n=1,144)	Sig.
Sense of belonging	3.10	2.99	*	3.09	3.00	
Overall satisfaction	3.23	3.12	**	3.21	3.15	
Education Received in the major	3.39	3.33		3.36	3.36	
Advising you received in your major	3.15	3.11		3.12	3.13	
Involvement in campus activities	2.99	2.80	***	3.04	2.76	***
Career support from faculty and staff (e.g., assistance with career planning, job search, etc.)	3.11	2.87	***	3.00	2.99	
Preparation for work	3.09	2.95	**	3.00	3.03	
Preparation for a post-baccalaureate study	3.12	2.92	***	3.04	3.01	

Numbers represent mean responses, with response options ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 4 (very satisfied). Significant main effects for "have done or plan to do research/creative work" $F(9, 1845) = 4.522, p < .001$ and transfer status $F(9, 1845) = 6.653, p < .001$, two-way MANOVA.

Student Well-Being

- Seniors who have done or planned to do research or creative activity/projects with faculty outside of class outperformed their peers on three of the four items measuring well-being (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Student Well-Being by Participation in Undergraduate Research



Percentages are for 5 and 6 combined on a response range from 1 (not at all certain) to 6 (very certain). $N=356$ and $1,591$ for the "have done research" and "have not done research" groups, respectively. Significant differences at * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$, t-test (2-tailed).