



2009-2010 Senior Survey results

University-wide responses

Prepared by
The Office of Academic Assessment
June 2010

Undergraduate students intending to graduate in December 2009, May 2010 or summer 2010, as identified by their departments, were asked to complete a web-based survey soliciting their opinions regarding aspects of their experience at Virginia Tech. After an initial contact and a follow-up from a departmental representative and several follow-ups from the Office of Academic Assessment, 2445 of 5561 students across the University returned completed surveys, resulting in a response rate of 44%.

As you review the attached information, note that the quality of these data are dependent on the number of students responding, the response rate, and the particular wording of each question. The survey provides only an overview of student perceptions and does not allow for in-depth probing that would lead to explanations behind those perceptions. Results, however, may indicate areas for further examination.

Some section highlights among responses include the following:

From my experiences at Virginia Tech, I have improved my

- Critical thinking skills (98% agreed or strongly agreed)
- Ability to retrieve information & resources to help solve a problem (96%)
- Ability to solve problems creatively (93%)
- Quantitative reasoning and problem solving skills (93%)
- Oral communication skills (93%)
- Ability to lead people effectively (90%)
- Understanding of ethical behavior (89%)
- Writing skills (84%)
- Understanding of the relationship between art & society (66%)
- Knowledge of classic works of fine and applied arts (60%)

The coursework in my department

- “required me to think critically” (97%)
- “increased my understanding of my field” (98%)
- “was intellectually challenging” (96%)
- “helped me synthesize information from different sources” (93%)
- “applied concepts learned in class to new situations” (92%)

The faculty in my department

- “set high standards for my learning” (93%)
- “were accessible outside of class” (95%)
- “encouraged active learning” (92%)
- “were concerned about student learning & development” (91%)
- “knew me as a person” (68%)

Participation

- Community service or volunteer work outside of any course requirements (68%)
- Internship, field experience, co-op, or practicum (64%)
- Attended a professional or scholarly meeting or conference (53%)
- Community service or volunteer work as part of a course (30%)
- Research project with a faculty member as part of a course/program requirements (25%)
- Gave a talk or exhibited work at a professional, scholarly, cultural, or artistic conference or meeting (19%)
- Research project with a faculty member outside of course/program requirements (19%)
- Study abroad (18%)

Demographic characteristics

- 65% intend to pursue a Master’s degree; 13%, a professional degree; and 13% a doctorate.
- 56% did not change their major; 33% changed their major once; 7%, twice.
- 49% took no classes for VT credit at other institutions; 22% took 1 -3 classes
- When students needed academic advising, they often used multiple sources, most often using their official academic advisor (64%), other students (55%), and/or a faculty member in their major department (42%)
- 78% were 22 years old or younger; 80% were white (non-Hispanic); 49% were female.
- 93% indicated that, if they were to do it all over again, they would attend Virginia Tech.

As you review this information or have questions regarding the results or the survey process, contact Dr. Steve Culver, Associate Director, Office of Academic Assessment, sculver@vt.edu – 231-4581.

The course work in my PRIMARY major department...

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	<i>University Mean (SD)</i>
1.3 was intellectually challenging	14 (.6%)	88 (4%)	1234 (51%)	1109 (45%)	3.41 (.59)
1.4 required me to think critically	8 (.3%)	77(3%)	1117 (46%)	1243 (51%)	3.47 (.58)
1.5 increased my understanding of my field	10 (.4%)	53 (2%)	820 (34%)	1562 (64%)	3.61 (.55)
1.6 helped me become a better writer	75 (3%)	644 (26%)	1187 (49%)	539 (22%)	2.90 (.77)
1.7 helped me synthesize information from different sources	20 (.8%)	149 (6%)	1442 (59%)	834 (34%)	3.26 (.60)
1.8 presented me with alternate points of view	23 (.9%)	274 (11%)	1354 (55%)	794 (33%)	3.19 (.66)

The course work in my PRIMARY major department...(Continued)

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	University Mean (SD)
1.9 applied concepts learned in class to new situations	20 (.8%)	182 (7%)	1324 (54%)	919 (38%)	3.29 (.63)
1.10 increased my understanding of ethical behavior	49 (2%)	374 (15%)	1424 (58%)	598 (25%)	3.05 (.69)
1.11 incorporated technology that enhanced my learning	49 (2%)	359 (15%)	1279 (52%)	758 (31%)	3.12 (.723)
1.12 increased my knowledge of technology	66 (3%)	471 (19%)	1165 (48%)	743 (30%)	3.06 (.78)

The faculty in my PRIMARY major department...

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	<i>University Mean (SD)</i>
1.13 set high standards for my learning	20 (.8%)	134 (6%)	1281 (52%)	1010 (41%)	3.34 (.62)
1.14 encouraged active learning	17 (.7%)	176 (7%)	1282 (52%)	970 (40%)	3.31 (.63)
1.15 encouraged student-faculty interaction outside the classroom	68 (3%)	487 (20%)	1231 (50%)	659 (27%)	3.01 (.76)
1.16 provided opportunities for students to learn cooperatively	26 (1%)	177 (7%)	1399 (57%)	843 (35%)	3.25 (.63)
1.17 were concerned about student learning and development	42 (2%)	174 (7%)	1391 (57%)	838 (34%)	3.24 (.65)
1.18 were accessible outside of class	23 (.9%)	98 (4%)	1476 (60%)	848 (35%)	3.29 (.59)
1.19 knew me as a person	151 (6%)	647 (27%)	1094 (45%)	553 (23%)	2.84 (.84)

2.1 When you had a question or needed clarification regarding an academic problem (e.g., what courses to take, graduation requirements, etc.) from which of the following resources were you more likely to seek an answer? (check all that apply)

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
My official academic advisor	1556 (64%)
College or department professional advisor	923 (38%)
College Academic Programs office	125 (5%)
A faculty member in my major department	1023 (42%)
A faculty member outside of my major department	141 (6%)
A staff member	301 (12%)
University catalog	754 (31%)
Departmental materials	866 (36%)
Other students	1334 (55%)

2.2 Which of the following best describes your OFFICIAL academic advisor?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
A departmental undergraduate academic advisor	802 (33%)
A faculty member in my major department	1326 (54%)
A faculty member outside of my major department	12 (.5%)
A staff member	58 (2%)
I don't know	245 (10%)

2.3 In the last year, how many times did you meet with your OFFICIAL academic advisor?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
None	467 (21%)
One time	476 (22%)
Two times	507 (23%)
Three times	328 (15%)
Four times	154 (7%)
Five or more times	266 (12%)

2.4 In the last year, how many times did you have telephone or email contact with your OFFICIAL academic advisor?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
None	532 (24%)
One time	319 (15%)
Two times	372 (17%)
Three times	270 (12%)
Four times	175 (8%)
Five or more times	528 (24%)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your OFFICIAL academic advisor.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	<i>University Mean (SD)</i>
2.5 I had adequate access to my academic advisor	90 (4%)	208 (10%)	1037 (47%)	857 (39%)	3.21 (.78)
2.6 My academic advisor was available when I needed help	93 (4%)	212 (10%)	1043 (48%)	827 (38%)	3.20 (.78)
2.7 I was given sufficient time with my academic advisor	97 (5%)	265 (12%)	975 (45%)	840 (39%)	3.18 (.81)
2.8 My academic advisor provided me with accurate information about degree requirements and course sequencing	140 (6%)	271 (13%)	938 (43%)	826 (38%)	3.13 (.86)
2.9 My academic advisor was knowledgeable about the requirements needed to complete my degree	121 (6%)	236 (11%)	962 (44%)	852 (39%)	3.17 (.83)
2.10 My academic advisor provided me with assistance selecting appropriate elective courses	175 (8%)	439 (18%)	923 (42%)	639 (29%)	2.93 (.90)

The course work in my SECONDARY major department...

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	<i>University Mean (SD)</i>
3.1 was intellectually challenging	2 (.7%)	27 (9%)	141 (47%)	132 (44%)	3.33 (.67)
3.2 required me to think critically	3 (1%)	26 (9%)	137 (45%)	136 (45%)	3.34 (.68)
3.3 increased my understanding of my field	1 (.3%)	9 (3%)	129 (43%)	162 (54%)	3.50 (.58)
3.4 helped me become a better writer	10 (3%)	63 (21%)	129 (43%)	100 (33%)	3.06 (.82)
3.5 helped me synthesize information from different sources	4 (1%)	30 (10%)	145 (48%)	123 (41%)	3.28 (.69)
3.6 presented me with alternate points of view	4 (1%)	26 (9%)	148 (49%)	125 (41%)	3.30 (.68)

The course work in my SECONDARY major department...(Continued)

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	University Mean (SD)
3.7 applied concepts learned in class to new situations	4 (1%)	36 (12%)	148 (49%)	114 (38%)	3.23 (.71)
3.8 increased my understanding of ethical behavior	12 (4%)	60 (20%)	147 (49%)	83 (28%)	3.00 (.80)
3.9 incorporated technology that enhanced my learning	16 (5%)	77 (26%)	139 (46%)	69 (23%)	2.87 (.83)
3.10 increased my knowledge of technology	23 (8%)	88 (29%)	124 (41%)	65 (22%)	2.77 (.88)

The faculty in my SECONDARY major department...

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	University Mean (SD)
3.11 set high standards for my learning	5 (2%)	28 (9%)	152 (50%)	117 (39%)	3.26 (.69)
3.12 encouraged active learning	1 (.3%)	23 (8%)	156 (52%)	118 (40%)	3.31 (.63)
3.13 encouraged student-faculty interaction outside the classroom	3 (1%)	60 (20%)	138 (46%)	100 (33%)	3.11 (.75)
3.14 provided opportunities for students to learn cooperatively	3 (1%)	27 (9%)	169 (56%)	101 (34%)	3.23 (.65)
3.15 were concerned about student learning and development	4 (1%)	23 (8%)	161 (54%)	111 (37%)	3.27 (.66)
3.16 were accessible outside of class	1 (.3%)	19 (6%)	167 (56%)	112 (38%)	3.30 (.60)
3.17 knew me as a person	11 (4%)	66 (22%)	126 (42%)	97 (32%)	3.03 (.83)

From my experiences at Virginia Tech, I have improved my...

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	University Mean (SD)
4.1 writing skills	48 (2%)	346 (14%)	1310 (54%)	741 (30%)	3.12 (.71)
4.2 oral communication skills	25 (1%)	150 (6%)	1214 (50%)	1056 (43%)	3.35 (.64)
4.3 critical thinking skills	9 (.4%)	53 (2%)	1136 (47%)	1247 (51%)	3.48 (.56)
4.4 computer skills	31 (1%)	326 (13%)	1248 (51%)	840 (34%)	3.18 (.70)
4.5 understanding of ethical behavior	37 (2%)	226 (9%)	1469 (60%)	713 (29%)	3.17 (.65)
4.6 ability to retrieve information and resources to help solve a problem	12 (.5%)	83 (3%)	1300 (53%)	1050 (43%)	3.39 (.58)

From my experiences at Virginia Tech, I have improved my...(Continued)

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	<i>University Mean (SD)</i>
4.7 understanding of the cultural traditions that have shaped Western experience	110 (5%)	530 (22%)	1234 (51%)	571 (23%)	2.93 (.79)
4.8 knowledge of the interaction between tradition and innovation	69 (3%)	378 (16%)	1456 (60%)	542 (22%)	3.01 (.70)
4.9 ability to compare alternative theories about human society, culture, and behavior	57 (2%)	338 (14%)	1412 (58%)	638 (26%)	3.08 (.70)
4.10 understanding of patterns and processes that affect the relationship between the individual and society	54 (2%)	293 (12%)	1469 (60%)	629 (26%)	3.09 (.68)
4.11 ability to evaluate the credibility of, use and misuse of scientific information	35 (1%)	229 (9%)	1405 (58%)	776 (32%)	3.20 (.66)

From my experiences at Virginia Tech, I have improved my...(Continued)

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	University Mean (SD)
4.12 ability to describe methods of inquiry that lead to scientific knowledge	23 (.9%)	305 (13%)	1465 (60%)	652 (27%)	3.12 (.64)
4.13 quantitative reasoning and problem solving skills	25 (1%)	172 (7%)	1316 (54%)	932 (38%)	3.29 (.64)
4.14 understanding of fundamental principles of reasoning involved in mathematics or logic	56 (2%)	313 (13%)	1316 (54%)	760 (31%)	3.14 (.72)
4.15 understanding of the relationship between art and society	146 (6%)	708 (29%)	1162 (48%)	429 (18%)	2.77 (.81)
4.16 knowledge of classic works of fine and applied arts	209 (9%)	781 (32%)	1087 (45%)	368 (15%)	2.66 (.84)

From my experiences at Virginia Tech, I have improved my...(Continued)

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree (4)	<i>University Mean (SD)</i>
4.17 knowledge of different cultures and lifestyles	80 (3%)	356 (15%)	1398 (57%)	611 (25%)	3.04 (.73)
4.18 knowledge of environmental issues	51 (2%)	342 (14%)	1356 (56%)	696 (29%)	3.10 (.71)
4.19 ability to solve problems creatively	15 (.6%)	150 (6%)	1389 (57%)	891 (36%)	3.29 (.61)
4.20 ability to lead people effectively	23 (.9%)	190 (8%)	1326 (54%)	906 (37%)	3.27 (.64)
4.21 knowledge of global issues	41 (2%)	290 (12%)	1395 (57%)	719 (29%)	3.14 (.68)

4.22 Which of the following have you participated in while at Virginia Tech? (check all that apply)

	<u>University Frequency (%)</u>
Internship, field experience, co-op, or practicum	1522 (64%)
Community service or volunteer work AS PART OF A COURSE	713 (30%)
Community service or volunteer work OUTSIDE OF ANY COURSE REQUIREMENTS	1621 (68%)
University learning community	226 (10%)

4.22 Which of the following have you participated in while at Virginia Tech? (check all that apply) (Continued)

	<u>University Frequency (%)</u>
Research project with a faculty member AS PART OF A COURSE/PROGRAM REQUIREMENT	597 (25%)
Research project with a faculty member OUTSIDE OF A COURSE/PROGRAM REQUIREMENT	449 (19%)
Study abroad	441 (18%)
Attended a professional or scholarly meeting or conference	1260 (53%)
Gave a talk or exhibited your work at a professional, scholarly, cultural, or artistic conference or meeting	447 (19%)

4.22 Which of the following have you participated in while at Virginia Tech? (check all that apply)

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
Intramural sports	1184 (50%)
Intercollegiate sports	242 (10%)
Organizations or clubs designed for people in your primary major	1208 (51%)
Other student organizations	1591 (67%)

5.1 What is your graduation date?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
December 2009	389 (16%)
May 2010	1877 (77%)
Summer 2010	143 (6%)
Other	29 (1%)

5.2 What year did you first enter Virginia Tech?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
2008 or later	92 (4%)
2007	243 (10%)
2006	1452 (60%)
2005	515 (21%)
2004	72 (3%)
2003 or before	67 (3%)

**5.3 How many classes have you taken for VT credit at other institutions
(not counting AP and Dual Enrollment courses taken during high
school)?**

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
0	1199 (49%)
1-3	530 (22%)
4-6	183 (8%)
7-10	127 (5%)
11-13	53 (2%)
14-16	49 (2%)
More than 16	296 (12%)

5.4 How many times did you change your major?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
0	1367 (56%)
1	802 (33%)
2	172 (7%)
3	78 (3%)
4 or more	14 (.6%)

5.5 If you changed your major at least once, please indicate the most important reason why you did so?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
I did not change my major	1105 (54%)
Academic difficulties in my previous major	76 (4%)
Lack of interest in my previous major	239 (12%)
More interest in subject matter of my new major	370 (18%)
My new major was easier for me	17 (.8%)
My new major better fit my career goals	230 (11%)
I can earn more money with a degree in my new major	22 (1%)
Faculty reputation in my new major	5 (.2%)

5.6 Your current age?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
22 or younger	1909 (78%)
23-24	410 (17%)
25-27	65 (3%)
28-30	26 (1%)
31-35	16 (.7%)
36 or older	8 (.3%)

5.7 What is your racial or ethnic background?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
African American	57 (2%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	191 (8%)
Hispanic/Latino	62 (3%)
Native American	6 (.2%)
White (non-Hispanic)	1953 (80%)
Multi-racial	52 (2%)
None of the above categories	22 (.9%)
Prefer not to Answer	93 (4%)

5.8 Your gender?

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
Female	1196 (49%)
Male	1234 (51%)

5.9 Which of the following is most likely to be your principal activity upon graduation? (check all that apply)

	<i>University Frequency (%)</i>
Employment, full-time paid	1379 (58%)
Employment, part-time paid	113 (5%)
Graduate or professional school, full-time	694 (29%)
Graduate or professional school, part-time	29 (1%)
Additional undergraduate coursework	37 (2%)
Military service	72 (3%)
Volunteer activity (e.g., peace corps)	43 (2%)
Starting or raising a family	16 (.7%)

5.10 If you were to do it all over...

	Definitely no (1)	Probably no (2)	Probably yes (3)	Definitely yes (4)	University Mean (SD)
would you attend Virginia Tech again?	35 (1%)	126 (5%)	565 (23%)	1713 (70%)	3.62 (.65)
