

International Experience of Graduating Seniors, Spring 2004

Introduction

A telephone survey of Texas A&M seniors who planned to graduate in May of 2004 was conducted in the spring semester. A total of 587 completed surveys were obtained from all students who graduated in May of 2004. An attempt was made to reach each student three times on different days and times.

The survey was made up of questions in four areas: general satisfaction with quality of education at TAMU, international experience, estimated gains in specific areas, and plans for the future. The results of questions in international experience and gains are presented below.

Table 1.

Demographics of Respondents

Gender	Count	%
F	305	52
M	282	48
Ethnicity	Count	%
African American	15	2.6
Hispanic/Latino	49	8.3
Native American	1	.2
Asian/Pacific Is.	19	3.2
Anglo	496	84.5
Other	7	1.2
College	Count	%
Agriculture	88	15.0
Architecture	23	3.9
Business Admin.	78	13.3
Education	40	6.8
Engineering	119	20.3
Geosciences	12	2.0
Liberal Arts	154	26.2
Science	36	6.1
Veterinary Med.	37	6.3

International Experience

Table 2a.

Have you lived or traveled outside the United States for reasons that were not strictly recreational?

Group	Count	%
No	457	77.9
Yes	130	22.1

Table 2b.

If "yes," Which of the following describe your foreign experiences?

Group	Count	%
Internship or co-op	8	6.2
Reciprocal exchange	4	3.1
Study abroad	66	50.8
Field trip	6	4.6
Employment	12	9.2
Non-academic program	29	22.3
Residence or family outside of US	4	3.1
Missionary or religious trip	8	6.2
Military	1	0.8
Other	6	4.6

Table 3.

If "other," please explain:

Group	Count	% of "other"
Lived abroad, non-resident	1	16.7
Medical trip	1	16.7
Vacation	2	33.3
With A&M	1	16.7
N/A	1	16.7

Table 4.

Breakdown of international experience by gender

	F	M	total
No	240	217	457
row %	52.5	47.5	100.0
col. %	78.7	77.0	77.9
Yes	65	65	130
row %	50.0	50.0	100.0
col. %	21.3	23.0	22.1
total	305	282	587
row %	52.0	48.0	100.0
col. %	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 1.

Percent of Graduating Seniors in Spring 2004 with International Experience, by Gender

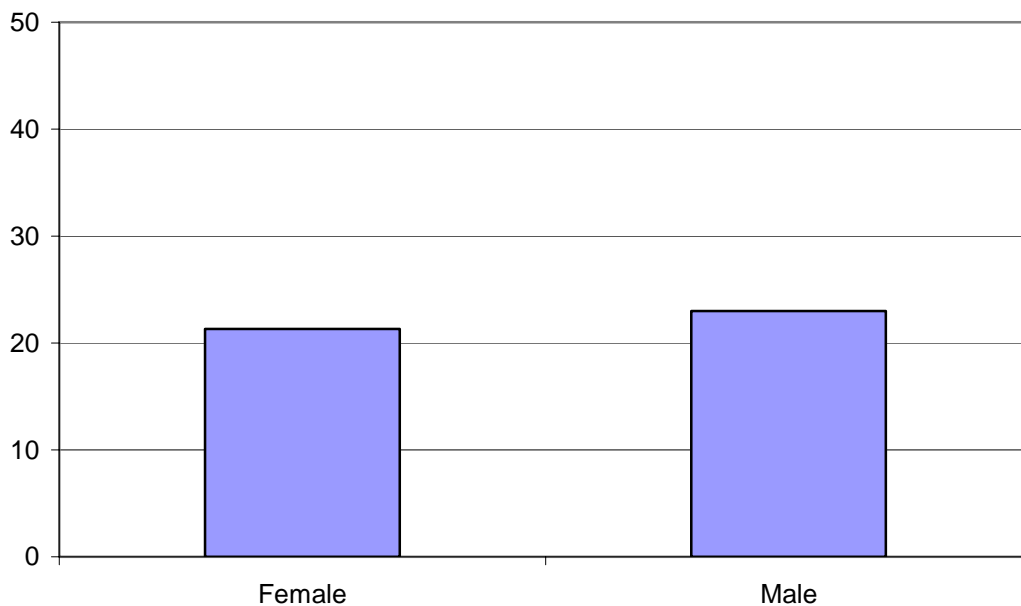


Table 5.

Break down of international experience by ethnicity

	Af. Am.	Hisp.	Nat. Am.	Asian / Pac. Is.	Anglo	Other	total
No	14	38	0	10	391	4	457
row%	3.1	8.3	0.0	2.2	85.6	0.9	100.0
col%	93.3	77.6	0.0	52.6	78.8	57.1	77.9
Yes	1	11	1	9	105	3	130
row%	0.8	8.5	0.8	6.9	80.8	2.3	100.0
col%	6.7	22.4	100.0	47.4	21.2	42.9	22.1
total	15	49	1	19	496	7	587
row%	2.6	8.3	.2	3.2	84.5	1.2	100.0
col%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 2.

Percent of Graduating Seniors in Spring 2004 with International Experience, by Ethnicity

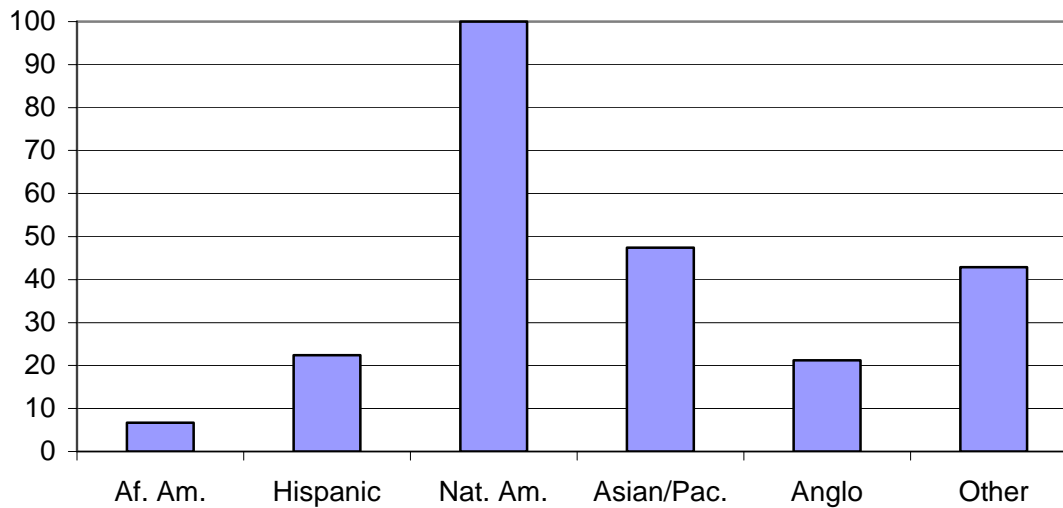


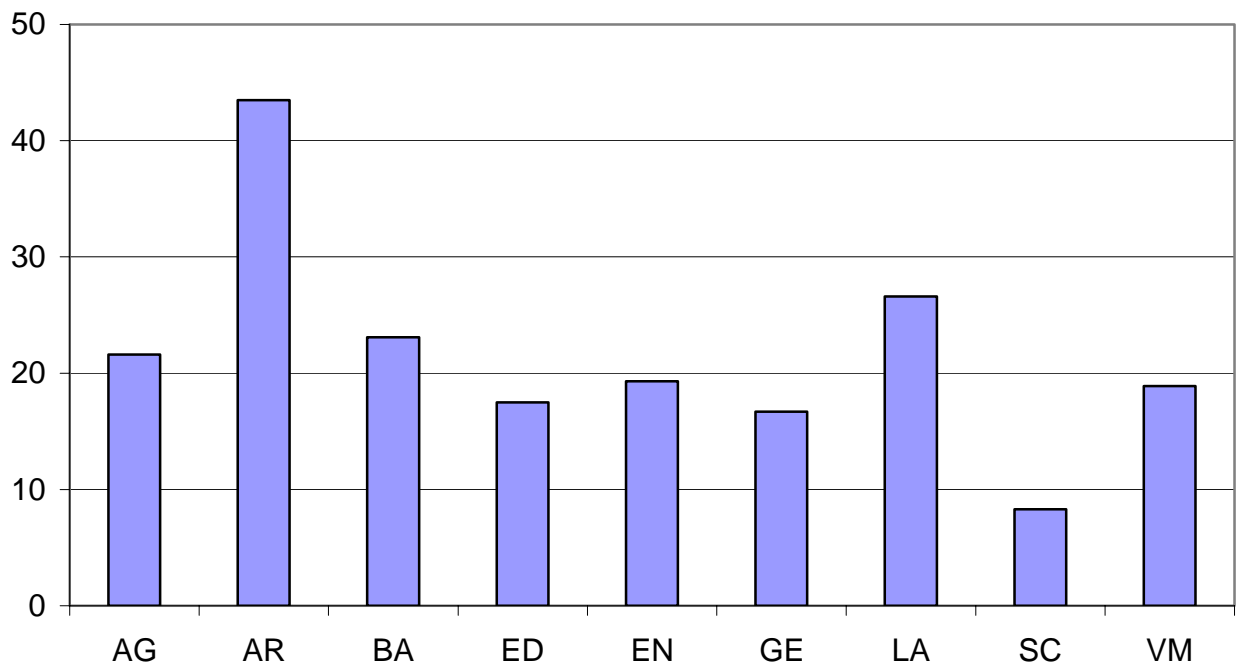
Table 6.

Break down of international experience by college

	AG	AR	BA	ED	EN	GE	LA	SC	VM	total
No	69	13	60	33	96	10	113	33	30	457
row%	15.1	2.8	13.1	7.2	21.0	2.2	24.7	7.2	6.6	100
col %	78.4	56.5	76.9	82.5	80.7	83.3	73.4	91.7	81.1	77.9
Yes	19	10	18	7	23	2	41	3	7	130
row%	14.6	7.7	13.8	5.4	17.7	1.5	31.5	2.3	5.4	100
col%	21.6	43.5	23.1	17.5	19.3	16.7	26.6	8.3	18.9	22.1
total	88	23	78	40	119	12	154	36	37	587
row%	15.0	3.9	13.3	6.8	20.3	2.0	26.2	6.1	6.3	100
col%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Figure 3.

Percent of Graduating Seniors in Spring 2004 with International Experience, by College



Effect on gains of living or traveling outside of the United States.

Students were asked how much they had gained in each of twenty-five academic areas.

The academic areas are presented in Table 7 and Figure 4 along with the percent responding "very much" or "quite a bit." The data are broken down by response to the question, "Have you lived or traveled outside the United States for reasons that were not strictly recreational?" Gains in which those with and without international experience differ significantly ($p < .002$, with this being chosen as the significance level by using a Bonferroni correction, or dividing the standard significance level of .05 by the number of test items that were analyzed) are indicated with an asterisk. Students who answered "yes" to international experience reported significantly greater gains in the academic area of "knowledge of the world" than those without international experience. There were no other statistically significant differences.

Table 7.

Reported gains by international experience.

	International Experience	
	Yes	No
Learning on your own, pursuing ideas, and finding information you need.	90.0%	87.1%
Putting ideas together, seeing relationships, similarities, and differences between ideas.	90.0%	82.7%
Thinking analytically and logically.	86.9%	84.2%
Understanding yourself, your abilities, interests and personality.	86.9%	85.8%
Learning to adapt to change (new technologies, different jobs or personal circumstances, etc.)	85.4%	82.7%
Developing the ability to get along with different kinds of people.	83.9%	83.2%
Presenting ideas and information effectively when speaking to others.	83.9%	78.8%
Developing the ability to function as a member of a team.	83.1%	84.7%
Using computers and other information technologies.	80.8%	85.4%
Developing your own values and ethical standards.	79.3%	79.4%
Gaining a range of information that may be relevant to a	79.2%	79.6%

career.

Gaining a broad general education about different fields of knowledge.	75.4%	68.9%
Acquiring background and specialization for further education in a professional, scientific or scholarly field.	73.9%	67.6%
Acquiring knowledge and skills applicable to a specific job or type of work (i.e., vocational preparation.)	71.6%	70.7%
Analyzing quantitative problems (understanding probabilities, proportions, etc.)	65.4%	70.9%
Gaining knowledge about other parts of the world and other people (Asia, Africa, South America, etc.)*	60.0%	45.1%
Writing clearly and effectively.	58.5%	65.4%
Understanding the nature of science and experimentation.	57.7%	67.6%
Developing good health habits and physical fitness.	57.7%	60.8%
Understanding new developments in science and technology.	56.9%	65.4%
Seeing the importance of history for understanding the present as well as the past.	51.6%	49.3%
Becoming aware of different philosophies, cultures and ways of life.	51.5%	45.5%
Becoming aware of the consequences (benefits, hazards, dangers) of new applications of science and technology.	50.0%	58.4%
Developing an understanding and enjoyment of art, music and drama.	27.7%	27.1%
Broadening your acquaintance with and enjoyment of literature.	26.9%	30.6%

Figure 4.

