

Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

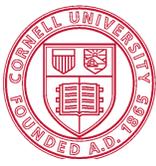
Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Agenda of the May 7th, 2018 Meeting

5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

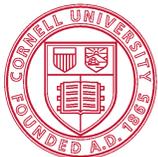
Bache Auditorium, Malott Hall

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call (3 minutes)
- III. Approval of the Minutes (2 Minutes)
 - a. Minutes from April 23rd, 2018
- IV. Presentations (25 Minutes)
 - a. CUeLinks, Heather Fortenberry (15 Minutes)
 - b. Doctoral Experience Survey, Manisha Munasinghe (10 Minutes)
- V. Division Breakout (10 Minutes)
 - a. Doctoral Experience Survey Discussion
- VI. Elections (25 Minutes)
 - a. GPSA Elections Procedure, Manisha Munasinghe, Arianna Gagnon, and Samir Durvasula (5 Minutes)
 - b. Elections of Officers (5 Minutes)
 - i. President
 - ii. Executive Vice-President
 - iii. Vice-President for Operations
 - iv. Vice-President for Communications
 - v. Counsel
 - c. Election of General Committee Representative (5 Minutes)
 - d. Elections of Standing Committee Chairs (5 Minutes)
 - i. Student Advocacy Committee
 - ii. Graduate and Professional Student Programming Board
 - iii. Faculty Teaching, Advising, and Mentorship Awards Committee
 - iv. Diversity and International Students Committee
 - e. Elections of University Assembly Representatives (5 Minutes)
- VII. Committee Updates (15 Minutes) (~1 Minute/Committee)
 - a. Executive Committee
 - b. Operations
 - c. Communications
 - d. Appropriations
 - e. Finance
 - f. Student Advocacy
 - g. Diversity and International Students



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

- h. Programming
 - i. Faculty Awards
 - j. General Committee
 - k. Consensual Relationship Task Force
 - l. Graduate School
- VIII. New Business (10 Minutes)
- a. Introduction to *Resolution 17: Current and Future Funding for the Annual Big Red Barn Alumni Networking Event* (10 Minutes)
- IX. Adjournment



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Minutes of the April 23rd, 2018 Meeting

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Bache Auditorium, Malott Hall

- I. Call to Order
 - a. *Members Present:* K. Angierski, C. Cannarozzo, S. Durvasula, A. Gagnon, J. Goldberg, R. Harrison, S. Hesse, M. Jodlowski, M. Kalaji, G. Kanter, C. Little, A. Loiben, T. McCann, E. Michel, A. Schofield, C. Stambuk, A. Viarruel, W. Zhang.
 - b. *Members Absent:* none.
- II. Approval of the Minutes
 - a. A motion was made to approve the minutes from the April 9th, 2018, meeting. The minutes were approved with unanimous consent.
- III. Presentations
 - a. Judith Appleton and Ted O'Donoghue of the Committee on Organizational Structures in the Social Sciences then made their presentation.
 - i. The committee was given wide latitude in formulating any ideas “positioning Cornell for excellence in 10-15 years: outstanding research programs, an extensive funding pool, outstanding educational programs, successes in recruiting and retaining faculty and graduate students, diversity in faculty staff and student bodies.” It operated under the idea of maintaining existing funding and of having no obstacles.
 - ii. M. Battaglia asked the presenters to help dispel the notion that the idea of merging ILR and Human Ecology is more than an idea. If this is just an idea, he asked them to clarify this.
 - iii. M. Munasinghe: there are 8 ideas in the report, who will make the decision?
 1. The Provost and the President will decide, the committee is actually dissolved at this point.
 - iv. It was asked if the presenters will write a recommendation to the Provost and the President based on community feedback.
 1. The provost is reading the feedback as it comes in.
 - v. S. Durvasula asked what considerations were made for undergraduate and graduate experience.



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

1. T. O'Donoghue: from the undergraduate point of view we were looking at opportunity. For graduate students it was a discussion of graduate fields and clearly articulating what fields are.
2. J. Appleton: the proposal for a Social Sciences Center has a lot of relevance to graduate education.
- vi. It was asked if they could go over ideas for restructuring graduate education.
 1. Main ideas were: making more of a community, creating clarity between fields, and if there isn't clarity between fields maybe consolidating them.
- vii. A. Loiben asked what is the timeline of this.
 1. J. Appleton: right now they're in the listening phase, this will go until people stop talking to them. There's no time limit on this part. Then they will discuss all the input that's been received. If certain ideas are popular they'll go into further development.
 2. A. Loiben asked if they'll come back to the GPSA then.
 3. J. Appleton: Yes.
- viii. An audience member asked how would the ILR and Human Ecology merger serve the goal of recruiting and retaining faculty and graduate students.
 1. T. O'Donoghue: the idea is that forging new connections will improve research.
- ix. An audience member asked what problem is the merger designed to solve.
 1. They weren't trying to solve problems. They were trying to think of ways so that Cornell, fifteen years from now, would be strong in the social sciences. The observations going back fifty years are that there are a lot of social sciences here, but they are very dispersed. The idea is to aggregate social sciences. When you bring people together it's an opportunity for people to interact in ways they hadn't had before.
- x. J. Goldberg asked what might consolidation look like on the ground. Could it be loss of job opportunities?
 1. It wouldn't eliminate jobs, it would just bring people together.



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

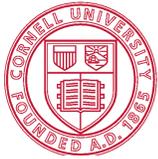
- xi. An audience member asked what kind of guarantees can they give us that the community feedback will be heard by the Provost, the President, and the Board of Trustees.
 - 1. J. Appleton: this process is very different from the process that created the College of Business. There are 8 ideas on a piece of paper right now, and we're listening to anyone who wants to talk about them. It's clear that this process has been informed by the College of Business process, but it's different. She couldn't put herself in the mind of the Provost/President, but she thinks they will listen or she and T. O'Donoghue wouldn't be doing this.
- xii. The presenters can be reached at the following email: ssreview@cornell.edu

IV. Division Breakout

- a. A special information session was held on the GPCI. Members could go to any of the five policy areas that interested them: Family Services, sense of community, Graduate Student Center, Housing, Diversity & International students.
- b. Voting Member elections (minus the professional schools and masters seats) were then held. The Voting Members for 2018-2019 are:
 - i. Arts and Humanities: Kristen Angierski (Division Chief), Becca Harrison, Andy Barrientos-Gomez.
 - ii. Social Sciences: Motasem Kalaji (Division Chief), Margaret Jodlowski, Ekarina Winarto, Wendy Zhang.
 - iii. Physical Sciences and Engineering: Daksh Arora (Division Chief), J. Kent-Dobias, Dietrich Geisler, Nathan London.
 - iv. Life Sciences: Alexa Cohn (Division Chief), Cinnamon Mittan, Kavya Krishnan.

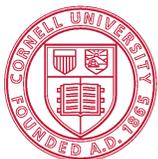
V. Committee Updates

- a. Executive: a sense of the body vote on the consensual relationship policies A & B was held through qualtrics after the discussion below.
 - i. CRP-A prohibits sexual and romantic relationships between faculty and graduate/professional students if both are affiliated with the same graduate field or degree program. CRP-B allows for such relationships provided there is disclosure and an appropriate recusal plan.



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

- ii. The Faculty Senate is meeting on Wednesday (4/25) to vote on it. 3:30-5pm in ILR.
- iii. President Pollack is making a policy by the end of the year.
- iv. M. Battaglia noted that this assembly is not representative of masters and professional students. This unrepresentativeness will be in this vote.
- v. C. Cannarozzo: Professional schools draw from a lot of different graduate field and degree programs especially with the faculty they use, so as it stands this disproportionately affects professional students.
- vi. S. Durvasula asked how would this affect masters students in engineering because they're not in a field or a school.
 - 1. There was not a conclusive answer.
- b. Operations and Staffing: the committee is working on the misconduct protocol over the summer so it can be part of the bylaws update.
- c. Appropriations: their next meeting is Friday, 6pm, 132 Morrison, working on ideas to get more members.
- d. Finance: the committee extended the deadline for summer funding requests and last funding requests for this academic year. They close on Monday, April 30th.
- e. Student Advocacy: their last meeting is on next Monday (4/30), 2pm, G01 Fernow Hall. In conjunction with CGSU they will be hosting an event called Let's Talk About Bad Advising, 4:30-6pm, room TBD. Email B. Kisselstein (bmk76) with questions.
- f. Diversity and International Students: they are holding one more event, What's Your Story, with Dean Pendakur, April 25th, noon, in the Willard Straight International Lounge. More information is on the DISC facebook page. They are also co-sponsoring a recognition banquet for graduate and professional students over the last year.
- g. Programming: Grad Ball is May 5th, 7-11pm, at the Museum of the Earth. Please forward an email to your constituencies. There will be transportation between the Museum and Cornell. They are looking for a new chair for next year. Email C. Cannarozzo (cjc365) with questions.
- h. General Committee: they are looking for someone to fill A. Natarajan's seat.



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

- i. Faculty Awards: they got 82 nominations and could use help reading through them. Please talk to A. Schofield if you want to get involved. Reading the nominations is a very happy process (1-week commitment).
- j. Graduate School: on Friday, May 4th, 4pm, they will be holding a special event recognizing all members of the GPSA in the BRB.

VI. New Business

- a. Introduction (and then discussion) of **Resolution 16**
 - i. A motion was made to extend the meeting by 10 minutes, there was no dissent.
 - ii. J. Goldberg: 89 faculty members signed a letter opposing the lessening of the language requirement in Arts & Sciences (almost every member of Romance Studies). This reduction would mean a decrease in teaching and funding opportunities in these fields. He stated our duty is to show we are in solidarity with our constituencies. The resolved clauses point out that we are signaling our discontent with a specific part of this proposal, and that we do support ASL counting for the language requirement.
 - iii. E. Cecchetti asked what the committee's rationale was.
 - 1. J. Goldberg: the committee believes undergraduates are being dissuaded from joining the College of Arts and Sciences because of the language requirement. They also want to recommend the language requirement for study abroad be changed.
 - iv. A. Loiben asked if J. Goldberg had any information on peer institution language requirements.
 - 1. A. Barrientos-Gomez: their standards are lower.
 - v. C. Little asked did the committee have any data on students not coming to A&S because of the language requirement.
 - 1. J. Goldberg: just by talking with some students, not through a survey.
 - vi. B. Kisselstein asked if this Resolution is saying that in the future ASL should count if classes are offered in it, or that there should be ASL classes now.
 - 1. J. Goldberg: the committee's recommendation is to have those classes offered at Cornell and have them count for the language requirement.



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

2. M. Munasinghe: there is a Resolution going through the SA about this, and the committee recommended ASL being counted.
- vii. A motion was made to move into discussion, there was no dissent.
- viii. A friendly amendment was made to add the “Be it finally resolved” clause:
 1. “Be it finally resolved, that in addition to the normal procedure of being sent to President Martha Pollack, this Resolution shall be sent to Gretchen Ritter, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, Barbara Knuth, Dean of the Graduate School, and Rachel Bean, Senior Associate, Dean for Undergraduate Education in the College of Arts & Sciences.”
 2. There was no dissent to taking the amendment as friendly.
- ix. A Motion was made to call the question on the Resolution, there was no dissent. By a vote of 17-0-1 the Resolution passed.

VII. Old Business

- a. Discussion of **Resolution 13**
 - i. A friendly amendment was made to put “at” before “Maplewood” in the title, there was no dissent.
 - ii. It was asked if there are any updates about this Resolution.
 1. The executive committee did get a communication from EDR about questions EDR will ask when hiring GCAs.
 - iii. M. Jodlowski motioned to amend line 112 by striking “are distraught by this in this proposal and”
 1. A motion was made to call the question on the amendment, there was no dissent. The amendment passed with unanimous consent.
 - iv. J. Goldberg motioned to amend line 128 by adding “paid” in front of “community leaders”.
 1. A motion was made to call the question, there was no dissent. The amendment passed with unanimous consent.
 - v. A motion was made to call the question on the Resolution, there was no dissent. The resolution passed by a vote of 17-0-1.
- b. Discussion of **Resolution 14** (line numbers make reference to the final copy of the Resolution, and the ORIGINAL appendices--which are attached under Resolution History--available at assembly.cornell.edu)



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

- i. T. McCann motioned to amend the Resolution by adding (to line 30) “Be it further resolved, Appendix A and Appendix B will be immediately appended to the end of the GPSA Charter.”
 1. A motion was made to call the question, there was no dissent. The amendment passed with unanimous consent.
 - ii. T. McCann motioned to amend Appendix A, line 85, by striking “(with the caveat that the organization may not receive more than its initial request during that byline cycle)”
 1. A motion was made to call the question, there was no dissent. The amendment passed with unanimous consent.
 - iii. T. McCann motioned to amend Appendix B, line 148, to say “Initial recommendations for any level of funding to an organization” in front of “are passed...”
 1. A motion was made to call the question, there was no dissent. The amendment passed with unanimous consent.
 - iv. T. McCann motioned to amend Appendix B, line 156, by adding a section e as follows (without the bulleted “a.”):
 1. “e. Initial recommendations to eliminate funding for an organization are passed by a 2/3 majority approval of seated voting members.
 - a. i. If the elimination of funding of an organization is rejected, the organization will be informed by the Appropriations Committee Chair and given the opportunity to revise its request.”
 2. A motion was made to call the question, there was no dissent. The amendment passed with unanimous consent.
 - v. T. McCann motioned to amend Appendix B, line 488, by adding “a. Travel includes lodging, transportation, meals, and registration fees.”
 1. A motion was made to call the question, there was no dissent. The amendment passed with unanimous consent.
 - vi. A motion was made to call the question on the Resolution. By a vote of 17-0-1 the resolution passed.
- c. Discussion of **Resolution 15**



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

- i. A motion was made to extend the meeting another 5 minutes, there was no dissent.
- ii. A motion was made to add an omnibus amendment (in blue ink, can be seen at assembly.cornell.edu).¹
 1. M. Battaglia explained the whereas clauses. The rationales behind this amendment were to incorporate diversity and international student seats, to reallocate the masters seats, and to tweak how the professional seats are done.
 2. M. Munasinghe explained the “Be it Therefore Resolved” clause (lines 62-81). This clause establishes the Diversity and International students representatives (each division will elect one). D&I representatives will attend DISC meetings. All Voting Members must serve on an internal committee. All Voting Members are required to attend the GPCI revision committee (which can satisfy their membership in a committee).
 3. M. Battaglia explained the “Be it Further Resolved” clause (lines 83-105). This clause deals with the four distinct Masters Voting Member seats. Additionally, each division will reserve one Voting Member seat for a masters student in their division.
 - a. M. Battaglia stated that the Resolution presented on the screen was not the correct version of the Resolution.
 4. A. Loiben asked how do you enforce attendance of these representatives at DISC.
 - a. A chair of a committee reaches out to the EVP, and the Executive Committee can vote to unseat the member.
 5. A. Loiben asked when would this go into effect.
 - a. These changes would not affect next year’s voting members who were just elected. Next year no one will lose their seat, but new seats will be added.

¹ The omnibus amendment presented on April 23rd, 2018, which amended the Resolution itself as well some of the Charter language, was in blue ink. The original amendments to the Charter called for by this Resolution and presented on April 9th, 2018, were in red.



Cornell University Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

6. S. Durvasula: we are leaving it open to field organizations to determine the term limits because masters students don't know a lot about the GPSA when we're coming into it at the beginning of the semester. That's part of the reason for having the seats stay reserved until the end of the Fall semester, before becoming an at-large seat if vacant.
 - a. This is for the four masters student Voting Members directly elected by their fields (MPA, MEng, MILR, one at-large).
7. M. Munasinghe: each division will have a Voting Member who serves as a D&I representative
8. M. Battaglia: this D&I representative will attend DISC meetings.
9. A motion was made to call the question on the omnibus amendment, there was no dissent. By a vote of 13-0-5 the amendment passed.
- iii. A motion was made to extend the meeting by two minutes, there was no dissent.
- iv. J. Goldberg stated he appreciates this omnibus amendment, but we must continue to think about this restructuring along with the GPCI. He likes this resolution but we need to continue this conversation next year.
- v. R. Carson asked how will the GPSA deal with the inexperience of masters students.
 1. M. Munasinghe: this really falls on the responsibility of the Executive committee and the Division Chiefs to educate their members and help them.
 2. A motion was made to extend the meeting by 3 minutes, there was no dissent.
 3. C. Cannarozzo: arguably everytime a new voting member joins the assembly, whether they're a one year masters student or in a long term program, they face the same learning curve.
 4. S. Durvasula: on the other hand [from R. Carson's question], under the current structure a lot of one year masters students don't have the opportunity to have their voices be heard, and the issues that matter to them slip through the cracks.



Cornell University
Graduate and Professional
Student Assembly

- vi. C. Stambuk asked could the GPSA have a presence at orientation in the beginning of the year to explain the GPSA for new graduate students.
 - 1. M. Munasinghe responded that last year the President of the GPSA gave a talk, there was a booth, and members of the Executive Committee were on a panel.
 - 2. It was clarified that during C. Stambuk's orientation this did not take place.
 - 3. A motion was made to extend the meeting by ten minutes, there was no dissent.
- vii. C. Cannarozzo: the language is included in the resolution but because we're using proportional representation the number of Vet School Voting Members will likely increase to 3 because the program is growing.
- viii. J. Goldberg motioned to call the question on the Resolution, there was no dissent. By a vote of 15-0-3 the Resolution passed.
- ix. A motion was made to adjourn, there was no dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Matthew Ferraro
Clerk of the Assembly

GPSA AY 2017 – 2018 Elections Procedures

Definitions:

GPSA shall refer to Graduate and Professional Student Assembly

Charter shall refer to the GPSA Charter

Bylaws shall refer to the GPSA Bylaws

Members shall refer to both Voting and Field Representatives of the GPSA

Majority shall be counted as majority of ballots cast.

Second to Last Meeting:

The divisions will break out by caucus, and the Division Chiefs will conduct the elections of Voting Members and Division Chiefs. Details for each position are given below. Voting members shall be selected first, and then the Division Chief from among the newly elected voting members.

Voting Member Elections, Graduate School (Professional Schools have their own internal procedures for electing their Voting Members)

See: Charter Section 4.05 and 4.06

Who Votes: Field Reps and Voting Members Within the Caucus.

When: The second to last meeting.

Eligibility: All students from the individual divisions. For physical sciences, one must be engineering one must be non-engineering.

Procedure: Break out by division, division chiefs are delegated responsibility for conducting the caucus elections of their respective division.

Vacant seats: Become at large at the same meeting. Any field rep may stand for voting member.

Notes:

Division Chiefs

See: Bylaws Section 3.06.D.vi.

Who votes: Field reps and voting members within the caucus.

When: The second to last meeting.

Eligibility: Voting members within the division.

Procedure: Break out by division, outgoing division chiefs are delegated responsibility for conducting the election of new division chiefs.

Vacant seats: Refilled by division. Positions must be filled.

Notes:

Last Meeting:

Elections shall proceed in the following order, in accordance with the Charter and Bylaws:

- 1) President
- 2) EVP
- 3) VPO
- 4) VPC
- 5) Counsel
- 6) GC Rep
- 7) SAC Chair
- 8) GPSAPB Chair
- 9) FTAMA Chair
- 10) DISC Chair
- 11) UA Reps (x4)

More details are given below. In general, there will be an announcement of the position, and a brief description by the current holder of the office or by a person knowledgeable about the position should the current office holder be absent.

Following this, nominations will open. Nominations do not require seconds. If no further nominations are heard, the nomination period will close. The chair of the elections committee shall be tasked with maintaining a list of nominees in the order they were nominated. Elections will then proceed according to the procedures outlined below.

More than Two Candidates (all positions)

As the charter and bylaws stipulate that all positions are elected by majority of the members, a candidate must secure a majority of votes cast in order to win.

Elections shall be conducted by ranked voting in the order of most preferred to least with no ties, with an immediate runoff by the following procedure:

- 1) The Elections Committee will tally the votes by the top ranked candidate only.
- 2) If no candidate secures a majority, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated, and ballots for that candidate will be recounted with the second ranked candidate considered the top candidate.
- 3) Process repeats until a candidate secures a majority.
- 4) “No confidence” shall be an acceptable write in, but no other candidate may be ranked lower than “No confidence”. I.e. If there are four candidates and a voter chooses “No confidence” as their second choice, their third choice shall not be counted. If “No confidence” secures the majority at the end of ranked voting or prevents any candidate from securing a majority, it shall be counted as a vote of no confidence; see section on “No Confidence”.
- 5) Blanks on the ballot paper shall not be counted, and any omitted candidates shall be counted as lower than the “No Confidence” vote.

Uncontested Elections (all positions)

In the event of an uncontested election, the sole nominee will be permitted a 30 second speaking time to introduce themselves. A vote will then occur by secret ballot. “No Confidence” shall be an acceptable write in. If the candidate fails to secure a majority of votes, it shall be counted as a vote of no confidence; see section on “No Confidence”.

No Confidence (all positions)

In any vote, members may submit a “No Confidence” vote. Blank ballots shall be counted as “No Confidence” votes. Should the number of “No Confidence” votes cast cause no candidate to secure a majority, it shall be counted as a vote of no confidence, and the vote seat shall open to a second round of nominations, followed by a second vote. If no candidate secures a majority votes in the second vote, the seat shall be considered vacant except for officer positions. As officer positions cannot remain vacant, the assembly will continue the process of soliciting nominations and voting until a candidate secures a majority. For non-officer positions that can remain vacant, the incoming Executive Committee, which serves as the Elections Committee, will be responsible for holding an election during the next academic year to fill that seat if any members wish to run for the vacant position.

Tied Vote (All Positions)

For all positions, in the event of a tie there shall be two questions from the members present, with each candidate that tied given 30 seconds to respond. Following this there shall be a second round of voting. If at the conclusion of the second round there is still a tie, the winner shall be decided by the toss of a US \$0.25 coin. The candidate whose family name is alphabetically last shall be allowed to declare their choice for heads, defined as the portrait of George Washington, or tails, defined as the face opposite heads. The Elections Committee Chair shall toss the coin and catch it in the air. In the event of a multiple way tie, a round robin tournament shall be conducted in which each candidate faces off against all other candidates. The candidate with the fewest wins is eliminated and the process repeated until one candidate remains.

Officer Elections

See: Charter section 5.02

Who votes: Field reps and voting members.

When: Last meeting of the term.

Eligibility: All matriculated graduate or professional students, except for counsel which must be a previous member of the executive committee.

Procedure: Nominations solicited at the meeting. All nominees will be given one 45 second statement, in reverse order of nomination. After all candidates have spoken, there will then be two questions solicited from members and ex-officio members addressed to all candidates. Each candidate will have 30 seconds to respond per question.

Vacant seats: See charter section 5.04. All positions must be filled except for counsel.

Notes: Officer positions must be filled in the listed order, no nominations may be accepted out of order and no vacancies are permitted.

General Committee Representative

See: Bylaws section 3.03.G.iii

Who votes: Field reps and voting members.

When: Last meeting of the term.

Eligibility: All matriculated graduate or professional students.

Procedure: Nominations solicited at the meeting. All nominees will be given one 45 second statement, in reverse order of nomination.

Vacant seats: Vacancies permitted. May be temporarily filled by the VPO subject to approval of the Executive Committee.

Notes:

Standing Committee Chairs

See: Charter section 6.02.D and 6.02.E.

Who votes: Field Reps and Voting members.

When: Last meeting of the term.

Eligibility: Voting members, but other members may serve as needed.

Procedure: Nominations solicited at the meeting. All nominees will be given one 45 second statement, in reverse order of nomination.

Vacant seats: Vacancies permitted. The VPO may appoint an acting chair from among the committee's membership, or from the executive committee. The acting chair will serve until an election may be held.

Notes: If there are two candidates, but only one candidate is a voting member, it shall be considered an uncontested election. **Additionally, the GPSA Charter and Bylaws do not currently allow non-members to serve as Standing Committee Chairs.** There are no provisions for suspending portions of the Charter to allow an election to take place in this case.

University Assembly Representatives

See: Bylaws section 3.03.G.iii

Who votes: Field Reps and Voting Members.

When: Last meeting of the term.

Eligibility: All matriculated graduate or professional students.

Procedure: Nominations solicited at the meeting. All nominees will be given one 45 second statement, in reverse order of nomination. Voters will list four candidates, unranked. The candidates with the most votes win. In the event of a tie for the last available position(s), there shall be a runoff vote for the candidates who tied. In the event of a second tie and only following a second tie, see section Tied Votes (all positions).

Vacant seats: Vacancies permitted. Must be refilled by election.

Notes:

1 GPSA Resolution 17:

2 Current and Future Funding for the Annual Big Red Barn Alumni
3 Networking Event
4

5 Sponsored by: Tyler McCann, on behalf of the Appropriations Committee, Cheyenne
6 Cannarozzo, GPSPB Chair 2017-2018
7

8 **WHEREAS**, Cornell Alumni Affairs facilitates an alumni weekend annually in June; and
9

10 **WHEREAS**, in 2015 the GPSA Executive Committee approached the director of the Big Red
11 Barn (BRB), Kris Corda, to host a special TGIF event on the Friday of the Cornell Alumni
12 Affairs weekend, which would invite visiting alum to network with graduate and professional
13 students over food and drinks; and
14

15 **WHEREAS**, in 2017 the BRB counted almost 290 Graduate and Professional students, and 100
16 alumni in attendance at their networking event; and
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18 **WHEREAS**, this BRB Alumni Networking event has taken place since 2015 with financial
19 assistance provided by either the GPSA and/or the Graduate and Professional Student
20 Programming Board (GPSPB); and
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22 **WHEREAS**, the BRB events in 2016 and 2017 were funded to the amount of \$750.00
23 exclusively by the GPSPB; and
24

25 **WHEREAS**, Director Corda approached GPSA President Ekarina Winarto in late April 2018
26 inquiring about funds for the BRB in the summer of 2018. Corda indicated that it was her
27 understanding that the GPSPB had funds earmarked for this event; and

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WHEREAS, there is no formal agreement on record of financial support from the GPSA or the GPSPB for this event. Additionally, the GPSPB was not obligated to fund the BRB event during the last funding cycle according to the GPSA Byline Obligations, nor does it require GPSPB to do so in the most recently passed obligations in GPSA Appendix B; and

WHEREAS, the GPSPB has exhausted its funds for the 2017-2018 academic year on other hosted events and is unable to provide the requested funds in 2018 for the BRB networking event;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, the GPSA allocates \$750 to the BRB to host this event in 2018; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that an additional obligation is added to Section 5.03 in GPSA Appendix B for the GPSPB, which reads, “The GPS Programming Board shall provide \$750 to the Big Red Barn for its annual Alumni Networking Event.”;

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

TYLER MCCANN
GPSA Appropriations Committee Member

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Results from the Doctoral Experience Survey

March 2018

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The Graduate School

This report summarizes results from the Doctoral Experience Survey, with attention to results at the Graduate School and discipline levels (i.e., Arts & Humanities, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences & Engineering, and Social Sciences). [Results from the 2017 survey](#) are the primary focus, but comparisons with results obtained in 2015 and 2013 are provided where possible, with reflections regarding potential reasons for some of the major trends observed. Data visualizations are used to illustrate overall response patterns within many of the survey sections as well as breakdowns by discipline for select items where there are significant differences between disciplines.

The report is organized into the following sections:

About the Survey.....	2
Trends at the level of the Graduate School.....	2
Overall Experiences	5
Frequency of Contact with Advisor.....	7
Advising and Mentoring Quality.....	9
Advising and Mentoring: Opportunities & Resources	11
Hours Devoted to Thesis/Dissertation.....	12
Non-Dissertation Research/Scholarship and Teaching	13
Professional Development: Sources of Guidance or Instruction	15
Program Climate	17
Campus Climate	19
Student Representation.....	20
Resources and Services	21
Career Plans	23
Obstacles to Success	25
Notes on Items related to Financial Support	29
Conclusion.....	31

Companion documents are available from the Graduate School website:

- [Response Distributions by Discipline](#)
- [Response Means by Survey Year for the Graduate School](#)

- Response Means by Survey Year for each discipline: [Arts & Humanities](#), [Life Sciences](#), [Physical Sciences & Engineering](#), and [Social Sciences](#)

Directors of Graduate Studies, Graduate Field Assistants, and university leadership (e.g., academic deans) may also access results on the [Graduate School intranet](#), where interactive online reports include options to display results broken down by various sub-categories (e.g., by survey year, sex, citizenship, and ethnicity), and at multiple levels of aggregation-- including at the level of individual graduate fields.

The university's [Diversity Dashboards](#) also display results from the Doctoral Experience Survey.

About the Survey

Since 2013, the Doctoral Experience Survey has been administered by the Graduate School every other Spring Term (i.e., 2013, 2015, and 2017). The survey invites response from all doctoral students enrolled in a Graduate School degree program for at least 2 years. The 2017 survey included the following sections: Overall Experiences, Quality of Academic Program, Professional Development, Resources and Services, Advising and Mentoring, Student Representation, Assistantships, Program and Campus Climate, and Obstacles to Academic Success.

The 2017 survey opened for response on February 26, and closed on March 28. **It should be noted that data collection for the 2017 survey occurred in the weeks leading up to the CGSU/AFT/NYSUT union representation election (which occurred on March 27-28, 2017) in a fairly contentious campus atmosphere.**

Of the 1,744 students invited to participate, 1,091 completed the survey, for an overall response rate of 63%.

2017 Doctoral Experience Survey Response Rates			
Discipline	Invited	Responded	Response Rate
Arts & Humanities	228	146	64%
Life Sciences	405	276	68%
Phys Sci & Engineering	769	465	60%
Social Sciences	342	204	60%
Total	1744	1091	63%

Trends at the level of the Graduate School

The following items had statistically significant differences between survey years (based on comparison of means):

Overall Experiences

Student life experience (improved): Mean ratings have risen steadily since 2013; the percent of positive responses (good, very good, or excellent) has grown from 80% in 2013 to 83% in 2015 and 2017. Since 2012, the Graduate School has increased student life programming and community support structures, with incremental improvements each year. Increasing emphasis has been placed on transitioning successfully into graduate school, navigating academia, leadership, communication skills, teaching preparation, mentoring skills, graduate students with families including attention to child care grants and partners' job opportunities, personal financial literacy, time management, writing support groups, and diversity and inclusion. Programming at the Big Red Barn Graduate and Professional Student Center has increased as well.

Advising and Mentoring

Written set of expectations about academic requirements and expected progress in your program (improved): mean ratings of effectiveness rose in 2015 and remained steady in 2017. The percent of students who indicated that this resource was not available to them decreased from 18% in 2013 and 2015 to 16% in 2017; among students who use this resource, the proportion who rated it positively (somewhat or very effective) has grown from 68% in 2013 to 75% in 2017. Since 2011, the Graduate School has required that each graduate field establish and update as needed an explicit set of learning outcomes for each degree program, and that every graduate field assess at least every two years how well those learning outcomes are being met by enrolled students. Assessment reports submitted by each field to the Graduate School include summary observations and plans for improvement.

Program climate

I don't have to work harder than my peers to be perceived as a legitimate scholar (wording reversed from the survey language) (improved): mean ratings of agreement rose in 2017; the percent of affirmative responses (generally or strongly agree) increased from 34% in 2013 and 2015 to 36% in 2017. Since 2011, the Graduate School has been building diversity and inclusion programs and resources for graduate students and graduate faculty.

My program supports students in pursuing career interests outside of academia, such as in industry, business, government, or the non-profit sector (improved): mean ratings of agreement rose steadily from 2013 to 2017; the percent of affirmative responses (generally or strongly agree) increased from 51% in 2013 to 56% in 2017. Since 2012, the Graduate School has partnered with Cornell Career Services by providing funding for staff to focus on supporting particularly the career development needs of doctoral students toward multiple career paths beyond academia. In addition, faculty PIs secured funding for the NIH-funded BEST (Broadening Experiences in Scientific Training) program, which was enhanced by internal funds from the Graduate School and several colleges to provide resources and programs to disciplines beyond the Life Sciences. Beginning in FY19, the BEST program will be renamed and expanded to support career exploration interests across all graduate disciplines.

My programs procedures are fair and equitable to all (**worsened**): mean ratings of agreement declined steadily from 2013 to 2017; the percent of affirmative responses (generally or strongly agree) decreased from 76% in 2013 and 2015 to 73% in 2017.

Student representation

The senior leadership at Cornell is committed to addressing issues of importance to graduate students (**improved**, increasingly polarized): mean ratings of agreement declined from 2013 to 2015 and peaked 2017. Positive responses (generally or strongly agree) increased from a low of 36% in 2015 to a high of 44% in 2017; during the same time period the percent of negative responses (generally or strongly disagree) remained stable while the percent of neutral responses (neither agree nor disagree) decreased by 7%. The Graduate School has been improving communications platforms to share information with graduate students (e.g., Graduate Announcements, regular visits to meetings of the Graduate and Professional Student Assembly- GPSA) and to solicit questions and concerns directly from graduate students (e.g., Ask a Dean column, regular meetings with GPSA leadership) so that solutions can be identified for the affected individuals but also generate ideas and advice to share with the broader graduate student community.

Campus climate

I feel safe at Cornell (**changed**): Mean ratings of agreement peaked in 2015 and declined slightly in 2017; positive responses (generally or strongly agree) increased from 90% in 2013 to 93% in 2017.

Resources and services

Library and electronic research resources (**improved**): mean ratings declined slightly in 2015 and peaked in 2017; positive responses (good, very good, or excellent) increased from 97% in 2013 and 2015 to 98% in 2017.

Funding provided for your stipend, tuition, and health insurance (**worsened**): Mean ratings declined steadily from 2013 to 2017; positive responses (good, very good, or excellent) decreased from 93% in 2013 to 88% 2017. Over this time, graduate fellowship and assistantship stipends increased by about 2.5% annually; doctoral degree tuition did not increase (and has not increased for about a decade). All funded doctoral students (on assistantships and fellowships) receive the Student Health Plan at no cost. In addition, the General Committee of the Graduate School amended the *Code of Legislation* to require that all graduate fields offer funding at the time of admission for a significant portion of a graduate student's program (dependent on satisfactory academic progress).

Programs and advising offered by Career Services (**changed**): Mean ratings peaked in 2015; positive responses (good, very good, or excellent) increased from 79% in 2013 to 84% in 2015, then declined to 81% in 2017. As noted earlier, since 2012 the Graduate School and Cornell Career Services have partnered to provide focused support programs especially for doctoral students interested in multiple career paths beyond academia. A personnel gap occurred in 2016-2017, with new staff starting in August 2017 and working on building robust career services support for doctoral students across disciplines.

Obstacles

Cost of housing (worsened): mean ratings declined steadily from 2013 to 2017; the percent indicating that this was “not an obstacle” decreased from 63% in 2013 to 56% in 2017. Additional graduate/professional student housing via the new Maplewood facility will be available starting in Fall 2018.

Family obligations (improved): mean ratings rose steadily from 2013 to 2017; the percent indicating that this was “not an obstacle” increased from 59% in 2013 to 65% in 2017. The Graduate School Office of Student Life, with many campus partners, has been working actively since 2012 to build support resources for students with families.

Academic or social isolation (worsened): mean ratings declined steadily from 2013 to 2017; the percent indicating that this was “not an obstacle” decreased from 58% in 2013 to 52% in 2017.

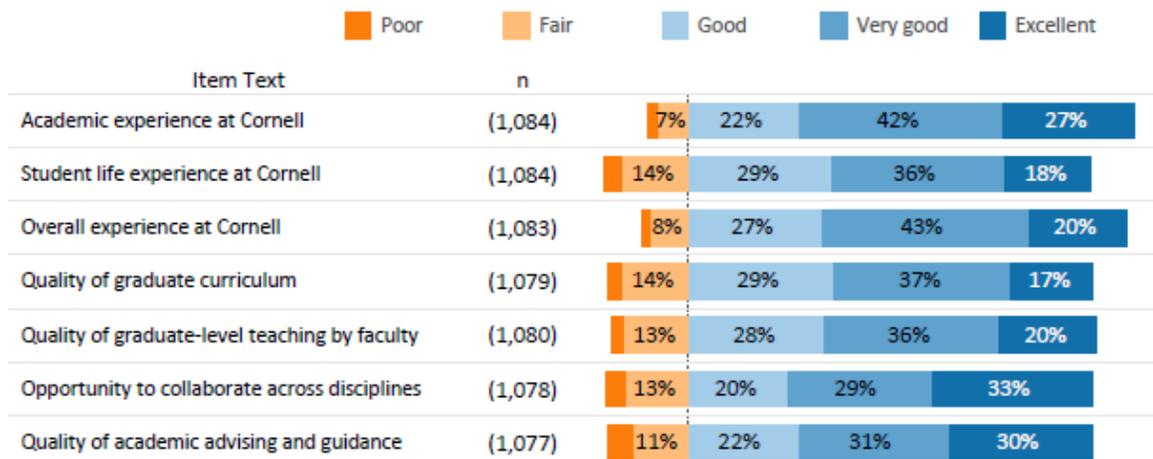
Current job market (worsened): mean ratings were the same in 2013 and 2015, then declined in 2017; the percent indicating that this was “not an obstacle” decreased from 58% in 2013 and 2015 to 49% in 2017. National conversations regarding the job market for doctoral alumni have intensified over this period as well.

Overall Experiences

The first section of the 2017 Doctoral Experience Survey asked students to respond to a series of global items for overall experiences and quality of academic experiences. Responses were collected on a 5-point rating scale that ranged from poor to excellent. The chart below shows response distributions for each of these items at the level of the Graduate School.

Overall Experiences and Quality of Academic Experience

Please rate the following:



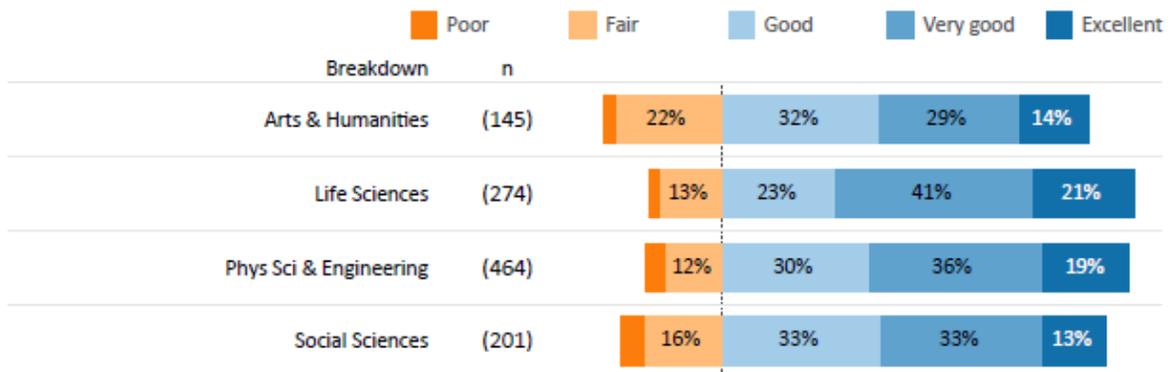
Across all of the global items, 80% or more of the responses were positive (good, very good, or excellent).

Nine out of ten respondents in 2017 rated their “overall experience at Cornell” positively. The total percent of positive ratings is the same as in the 2013 and 2015 surveys; differences between the disciplines were not statistically significant.

When asked to rate their “academic experience at Cornell”, 92% of respondents gave positive ratings; significant differences were not found between disciplines.

There were statistically significant differences between the disciplines on ratings of “student life experience at Cornell”. Positive ratings on the 2017 survey comprise 85% of the responses in Life Sciences, 84% in Physical Sciences & Engineering, 80% in Social Sciences, and 76% in Arts & Humanities. One fifth of students in the Social Sciences and a quarter of students in the Arts & Humanities rated their student life experience as “poor” or “fair”. Overall, positive responses on this item increased from 80% in 2013 to 83% in 2015 and 2017.

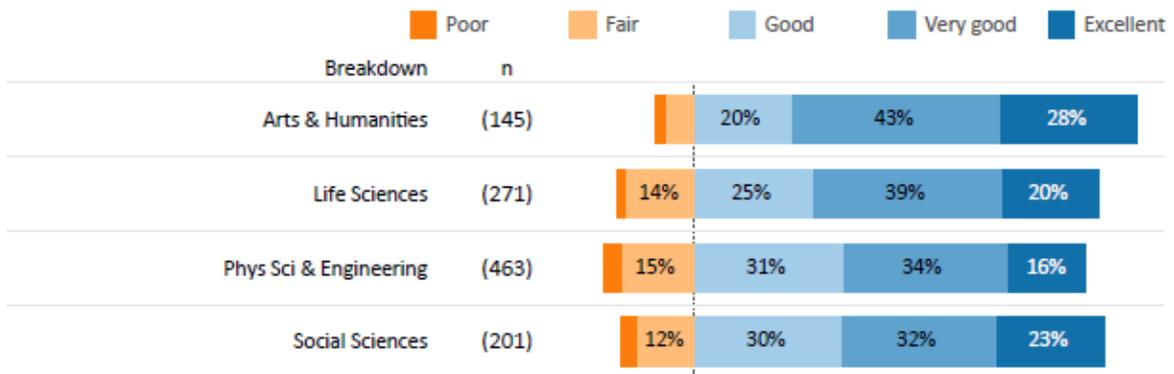
Student life experience at Cornell



In responses to the question, “Would you recommend Cornell to others considering graduate school in your field of study?” significant disciplinary differences were evident; a relatively larger proportion of students in the Life Sciences (91%) and Physical Sciences & Engineering (89%) said that they “probably” or “definitely” would recommend Cornell, as compared to those in the Arts & Humanities (84%) and Social Sciences (83%).

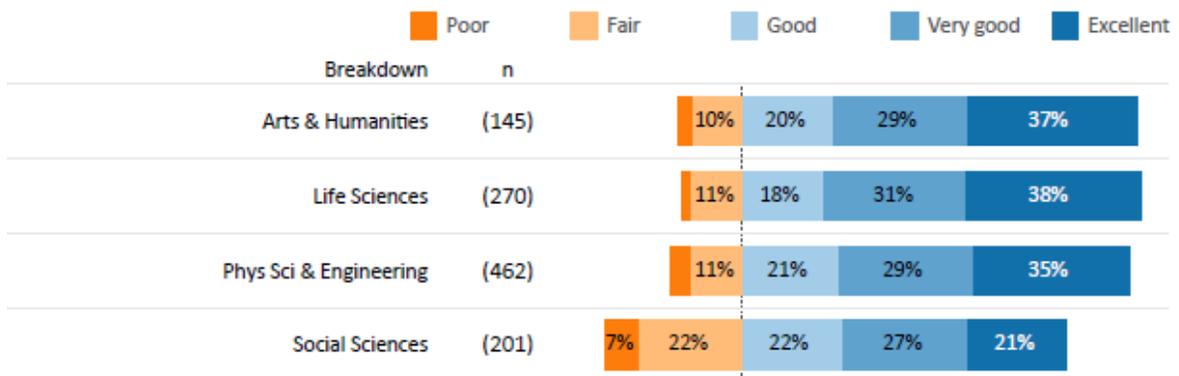
There were significant disciplinary differences on ratings of the “quality of graduate level teaching by faculty”, with the largest proportion of positive responses in the Arts & Humanities (92%) and the smallest proportion in the Physical Sciences & Engineering (81%).

Quality of graduate-level teaching by faculty



There were substantial disciplinary differences on ratings of “*opportunity to collaborate across disciplines*” with notably smaller proportions of positive responses in the Social Sciences (71%) relative to the other three disciplines (85% to 87%).

Opportunity to collaborate across disciplines

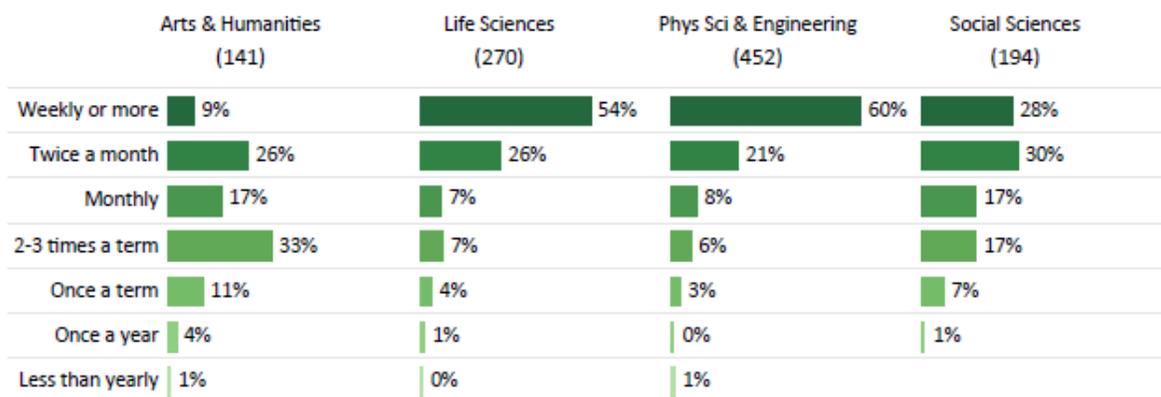


Significant differences were not found between disciplines in ratings of the “*quality of graduate curriculum*” or “*quality of academic advising and guidance*”; on both of these items 83% gave positive responses.

Frequency of Contact with Advisor

In the first of a multi-part survey section on advising and mentoring, respondents were asked: *How often do you typically have substantive contact with your advisor about your academic progress and research?* The replies, illustrated in the chart that follows, reflect large differences between disciplines. These differences may be at least partly attributed to the nature of research/scholarship in the various disciplines, with students in the Life Sciences and Physical Sciences & Engineering being relatively more likely than their peers in other disciplines to conduct field or laboratory research in physical proximity to their advisor.

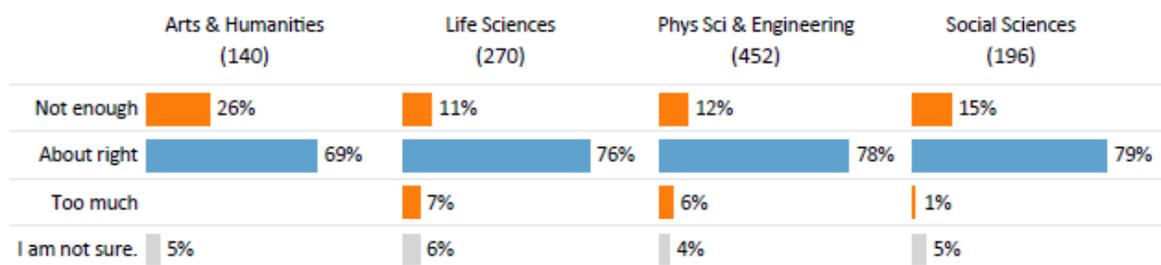
How often do you typically have substantive contact with your advisor about your progress and research?



Students in the Life Sciences and Physical Sciences & Engineering were significantly more likely than those in other disciplines to report having contact at least twice a month, and a majority reported having contact “weekly or more often”. Arts & Humanities students reported much less frequent contact; a third reported contact “at least twice a month” and just 9% reported contact “weekly or more often”.

As illustrated in the chart that follows, there were significant, but less substantial differences between disciplines in response to the follow up question: *Is this frequency about right, not enough contact, or too much contact?*

Is this frequency about right, not enough contact, or too much contact?



In the Life Sciences, Physical Sciences & Engineering, and Social Sciences between 76% and 79% of students indicated that the frequency of contact was “about right”, while 69% of Arts and Humanities students reported the same. There was notable variation in the percent indicating that the frequency of substantial contact was “not enough”, with a quarter of the students in Arts and Humanities reporting this, compared to between 11% and 15% of students in the other disciplines.

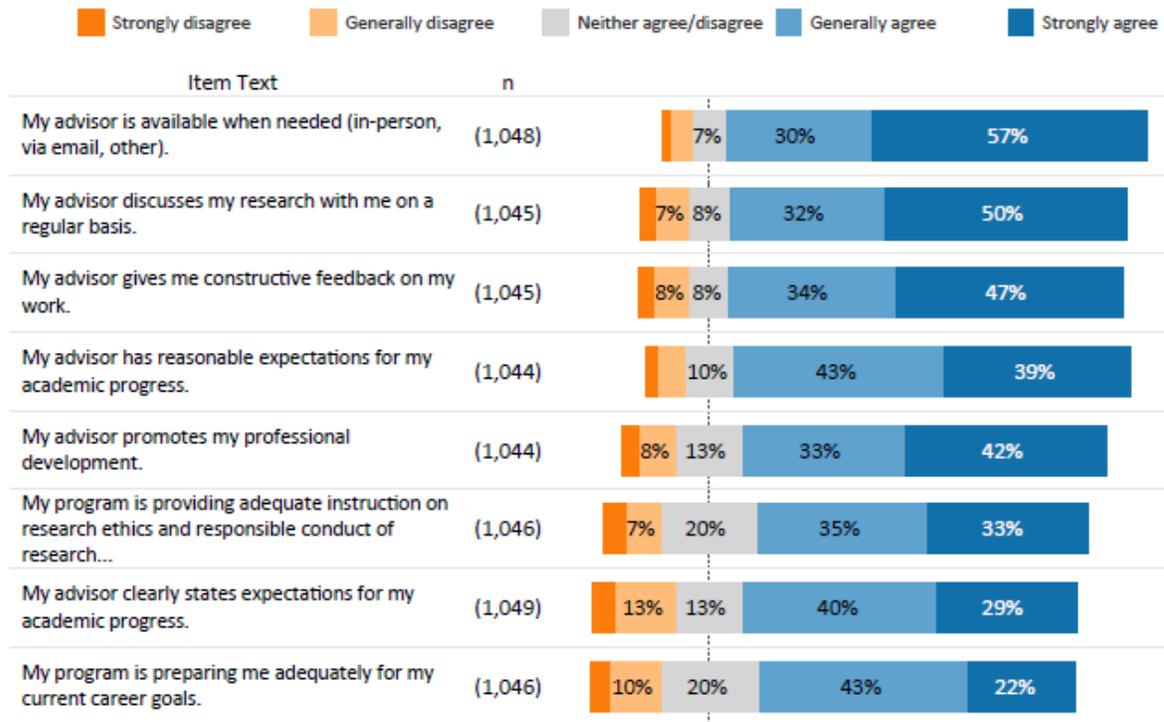
It is worth noting that while students in the Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences tend to have less frequent contact with their advisors, significant differences were not evident between disciplines on the global item, “*quality of academic advising and guidance*” (discussed in the Overall Experiences section, above), suggesting that these students don’t necessarily perceive the quality of advising and guidance they do receive less positively than their peers in other disciplines.

Advising and Mentoring Quality

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of positive statements concerning advising and mentoring in their graduate degree program. The chart that follows shows the distribution of responses based on a 5-point scale where 1 was “strongly disagree”, 3 was “neither agree nor disagree”, and 5 was “strongly agree”; the items are displayed in descending order based on the mean rating.

Advising and Mentoring (Quality)

Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements concerning advising in your graduate degree program:

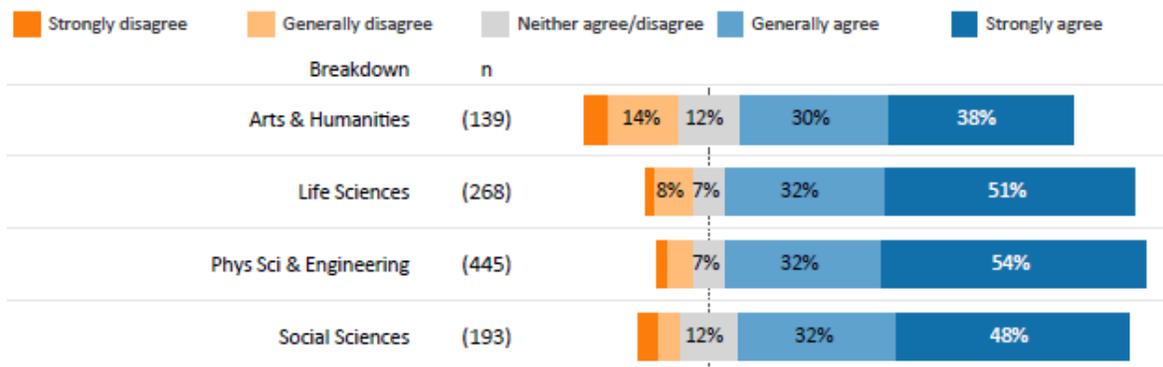


The statement with the highest proportion of students in agreement was, “my advisor is available when needed” (87% generally or strongly agree). Large proportions of respondents (81% or more) also agreed with statements indicating that their advisor discusses their research with them on a regular basis, gives them constructive feedback on their work, and has reasonable expectations for their academic progress. Three-quarters of respondents agreed that their advisor promotes their professional development. The Graduate School leadership team discusses these components of the faculty-student relationship, referring to these survey results, in the biennial review meetings held with the Director of Graduate Studies for each graduate field.

Substantial proportions of students disagreed with the statements, “my advisor clearly states expectations for my academic progress” (18% disagreed), and “my program is preparing me adequately for my current career goals” (15% disagreed).

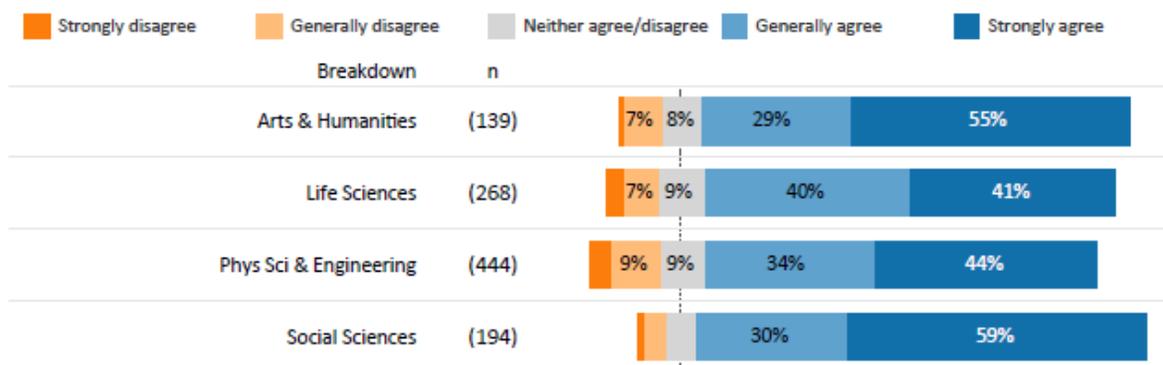
There are statistically significant differences between disciplines for some of the items in this section. For example, as shown in the chart that follows, a relatively smaller proportion of students in the Arts & Humanities (68%) agreed with the statement, “my advisor discusses my research with me on a regular basis”, compared to their peers in other disciplines (80% or more).

My advisor discusses my research with me on a regular basis.



Significant differences were also found in response to the statement, “my advisor gives me constructive feedback on my work”; as illustrated in the chart that follows, Social Sciences and Arts & Humanities had the largest percent of students who agreed (89% and 84%, respectively), while Physical Sciences & Engineering had the smallest (77%), though still a substantive majority.

My advisor gives me constructive feedback on my work.



None of the items in this section showed statistically significant differences between survey years at the level of the Graduate School.

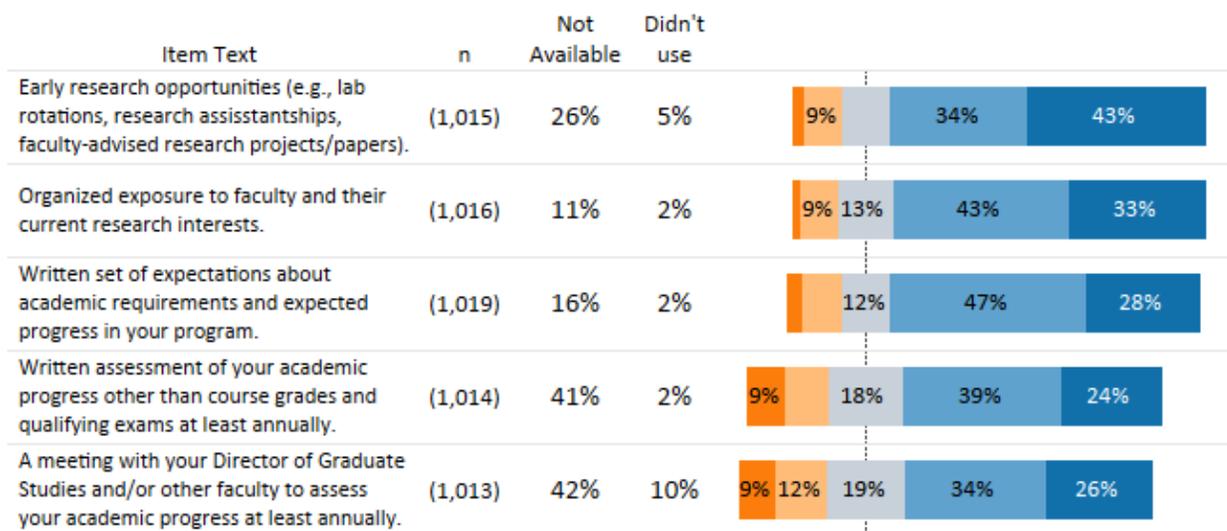
Advising and Mentoring: Opportunities & Resources

Respondents were presented with a list of five opportunities/resources and asked to rate the effectiveness of each one, if it was available to them in their program. Ratings were given on a 5-point scale where 1 = very effective, 3 = neither effective nor ineffective, and 5 = very ineffective; other response options were “not available” and “available, but I did not participate”. The chart below shows the distribution of responses (“available, but I did not participate” has been abbreviated to “didn’t use”); the items are listed in descending order based on the mean.

Advising and Mentoring Opportunities

If the following opportunities or resources were available to you in your program and you participated in them, please rate the effectiveness of each. Otherwise, please indicate if it was not available or you did not participate.

■ Very ineffective
 ■ Somewhat ineffective
 ■ Neither effective/ineffective
 ■ Somewhat effective
 ■ Very effective



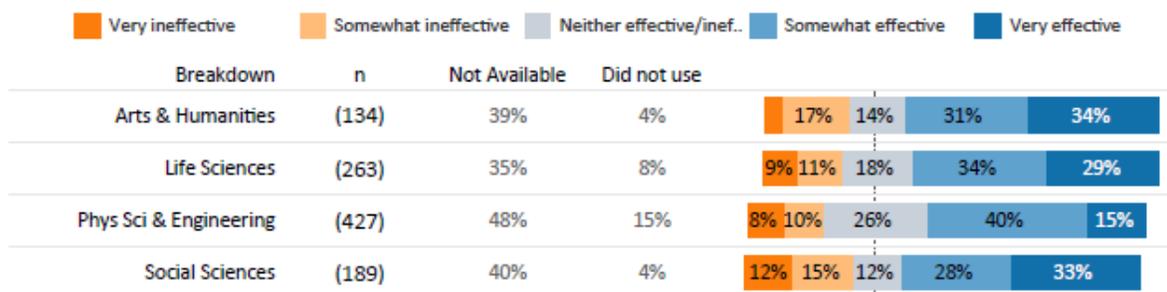
Note: Bar charts show results only for those who indicated that the given resource/opportunity was available to them and they used it.

In regards to the last two items listed, it is notable that more than 40% of respondents indicated that written assessment of progress, and annual meetings with faculty to assess progress, were not available. Annual written (online) assessment of academic progress and plans for the future, accompanied by a meeting between student and faculty advisor, is now required in the *Code of Legislation* for all doctoral students beyond the first year, beginning with the 2017-2018 academic year.

Among those students who participated in the first two opportunities listed, roughly three-quarters indicated that they were effective. There were statistically significant differences between the disciplines, with respondents in the Arts & Humanities being relatively less likely to rate these opportunities as effective.

One-fifth of the respondents who participated in a meeting with their DGS and/or other faculty to assess academic progress did not rate the experience as effective (21% overall rated it somewhat or very ineffective). There were statistically significant differences by discipline as illustrated in the chart that follows, with students in the Arts & Humanities being the most likely to rate the experience positively (65% rated it somewhat or very effective), and students in the Physical Sciences & Engineering being the least likely to rate it positively (55% rated it somewhat or very effective).

A meeting with your Director of Graduate Studies and/or other faculty to assess your academic progress at least annually.



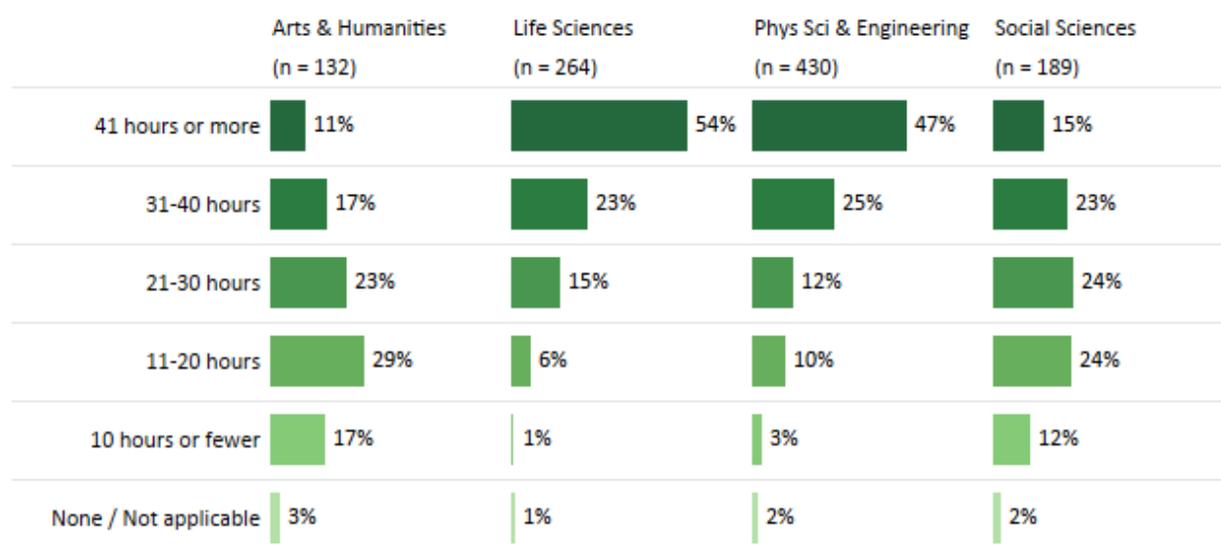
Ratings of the effectiveness of “written set of expectations about academic requirements and expected progress in your program” showed statistically significant differences between survey years; ratings increased between 2013 and 2015.

Hours Devoted to Thesis/Dissertation

Respondents were asked to estimate the average hours per week that they devoted to research/scholarship during the most recent Fall Term. The survey distinguished research/scholarship that was related to the student’s thesis or dissertation from that which was not related.

Over three-quarters (78%) of respondents reported that, during the most recent fall term, they devoted 21 hours per week or more to *research/scholarship that was related to their thesis or dissertation*. There were significant differences between disciplines in the hours reported (see chart that follows). A large majority of students in the Life Sciences (92%) and Physical Sciences & Engineering (85%) reported 21 hours or more per week, while much smaller majorities in the Social Sciences (62%) and Arts & Humanities (51%) reported the same.

How many hours per week, on average, did you devote to research/scholarship that was related to your thesis or dissertation?



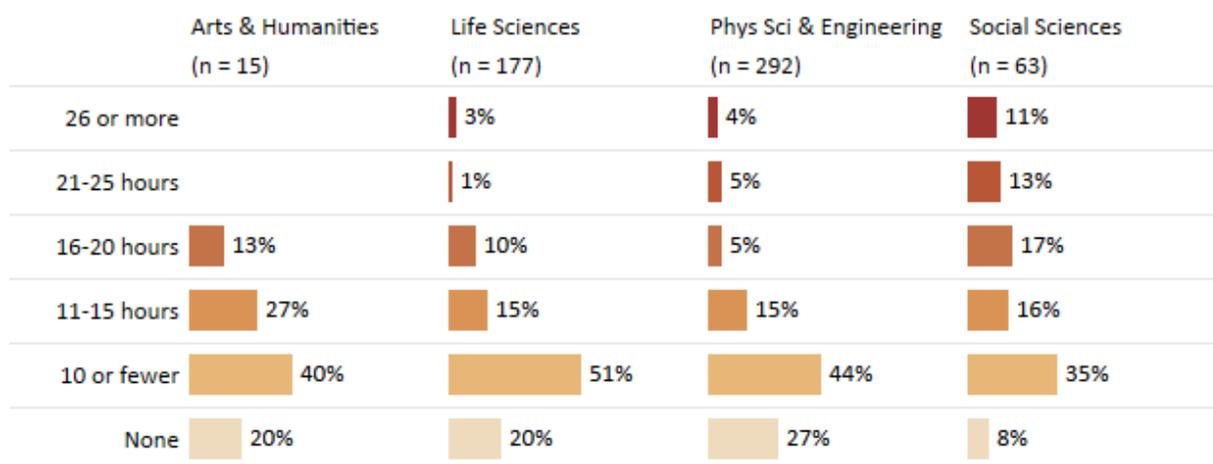
Non-Dissertation Research/Scholarship and Teaching

Hours devoted to non-dissertation research/scholarship: Respondents who held a GA, RA, or GRA appointment during the 2016 Fall Term were asked to estimate the hours per week that they devoted to *research/scholarship that was not related to their thesis or dissertation*. Of the 547 students who responded to this question, 90% reported 20 hours per week or fewer and 82% reported 15 hours per week or fewer.

There were significant differences between disciplines in the hours reported (see chart that follows). The most prominent difference was between the Social Sciences and other disciplines; for example, 41% of respondents in the Social Sciences reported devoting 16 hours per week or more to research/scholarship that was not related to their thesis or dissertation compared to 13% or 14% in other disciplines.

For students with GA, RA, or GRA appointments (This item was added in 2017):

During the most recent Fall Term: How many hours per week, on average, did you devote to research/scholarship that was not related to your thesis or dissertation?

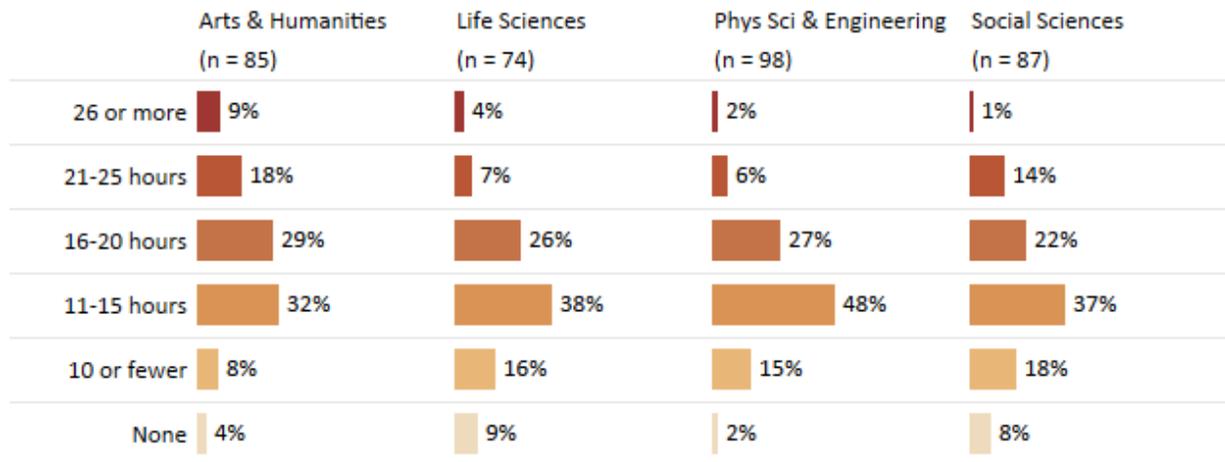


Hours devoted to teaching: Respondents who held a TA appointment during the 2016 Fall Term were asked to estimate the hours per week that they devoted to TA responsibilities. Of the 344 students who responded to this question, 59% reported 15 hours per week or less, and 20% reported 10 hours per week or less. Cornell University Policy 1.3 specifies that for a standard TA appointment, responsibilities should be no more than 20 hours in any single week and average no more than 15 hours/week over the course of the appointment period.

There were significant differences between the disciplines in hours reported (see chart that follows). The most notable difference was between Arts & Humanities and other disciplines; for example, 56% of respondents in the Arts & Humanities reported devoting 16 hours per week or more to TA responsibilities compared with 35% to 37% in other disciplines. TA responsibilities and perceived number of hours devoted by students are discussed in biennial field meetings with Directors of Graduate Studies.

For students with a TA appointment (This item was added in 2017):

During the most recent Fall Term: How many hours per week, on average, did you devote to TA responsibilities (e.g., teaching, grading, or learning material to be taught)?



Professional Development: Sources of Guidance or Instruction

Respondents were asked to indicate where they received guidance or instruction in thirteen different areas of professional development. There were four response options: “my academic degree program”, “other Cornell experiences (outside my academic degree program)”, “both”, and “neither”. The following definitions were provided for the response options:

- Academic degree program: coursework, assistantships, dissertation research/scholarship, and interactions with your graduate committee.
- Cornell experiences outside of an academic degree program: programs and resources of the Graduate School, Center for Teaching Excellence, Library, Career Services, etc.; also, experiences gained through internships, practicums, conferences, student organizations, community engagement, etc.

As a doctoral student at Cornell, where have you received guidance or instruction on the following?

■ My academic degree program
 ■ Both (program and other)
 ■ Other Cornell experiences
 ■ Neither

Item Text	n	My academic degree program	Both (program and other)	Other Cornell experiences	Neither
Identifying a mentor, advisor, or special committee	(984)	58%	21%	15%	
Teaching skills	(987)	34%	26%	23%	18%
Presentation skills	(987)	46%	27%	10%	17%
Understanding the professional and research ethics in my field	(983)	44%	28%	10%	19%
Preparing articles for publication	(985)	55%	17%		23%
Preparing for careers in academia	(986)	37%	29%	8%	27%
Skills for rmentoring students	(983)	26%	19%	16%	39%
Writting funding proposals	(984)	39%	15%	7%	39%
Dissertation writting	(983)	36%	15%	9%	40%
Skills for working successfully with a mentor, advisor, or special committee	(981)	25%	19%	13%	42%
Participating effectively in a diverse, multicultural world	(981)	11%	27%	18%	43%
Preparing for careers outside of academia	(980)	17%	16%	23%	44%
Personal life skills (e.g., time management, financial awareness, etc.)	(981)	9%	14%	23%	54%

A large majority of respondents reported receiving guidance or instruction from one or both sources on the following: “*identifying a mentor, advisor, or special committee*” (85%), “*presentation skills*” (83%), “*teaching skills*” (82%), and “*understanding the professional and research ethics in my field*” (82%).

“*Personal life skills (e.g., time management, financial awareness, etc.)*” was the only area listed where a majority of students (54%) indicated that they had not received guidance or instruction from either source.

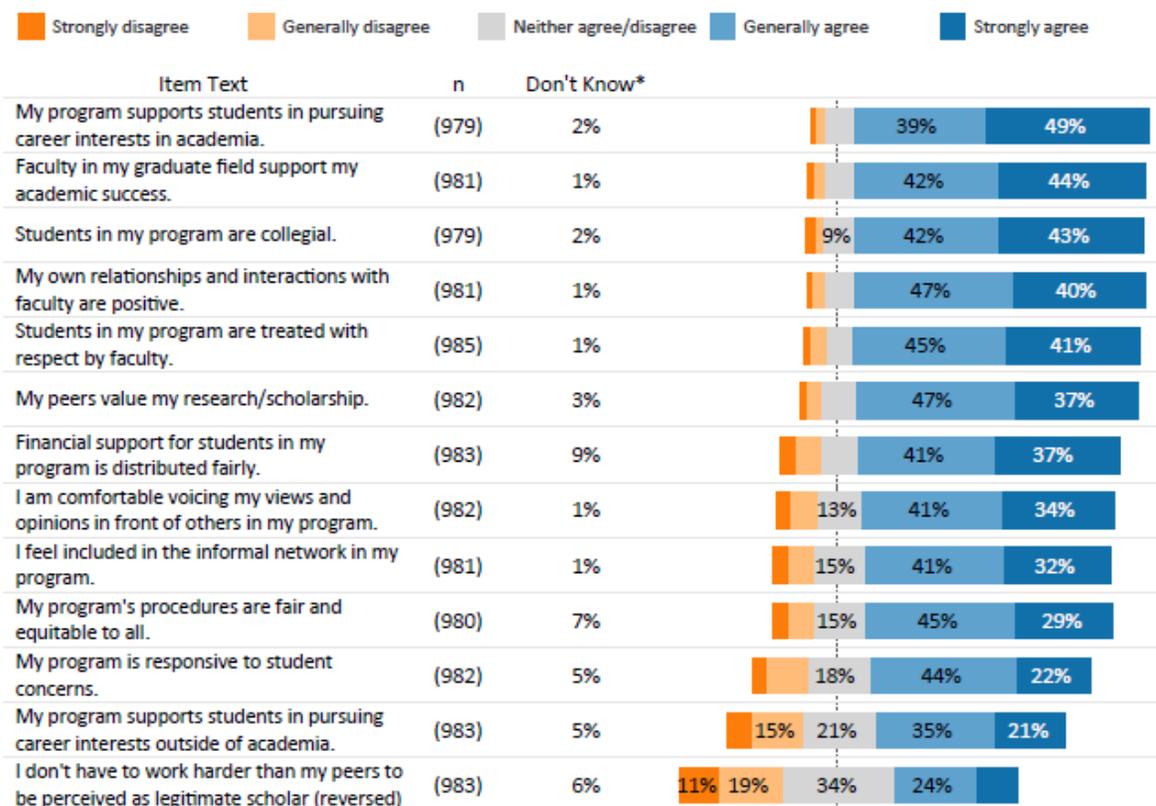
There were three areas where respondents reported receiving relatively more guidance or instruction from Cornell experiences outside of their academic degree program. These were also the three areas that focused most directly on life beyond the academy: “*participating effectively in a diverse, multicultural world*”, “*preparing for careers outside of academia, such as in government, industry, or non-profits*”, and “*personal life skills (e.g., time management, financial awareness, etc.)*”.

Program Climate

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of positive statements regarding their academic degree program. Responses were collected on a 5-point scale where 1 was “strongly disagree”, 3 was “neither agree nor disagree”, and 5 was “strongly agree”; the sixth response option “don’t know” is not included in the ratings. The chart that follows shows the distribution of responses; items are displayed in descending order based on the mean rating.

Program Climate

Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your academic degree program:



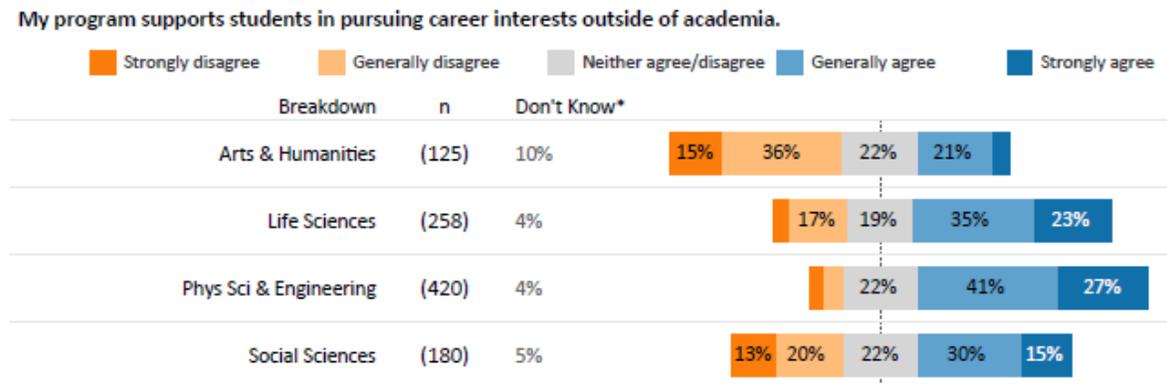
* Respondents who indicated "don't know" are included in the "n", but excluded from calculations for the bar charts.

There were four items in this section with statistically significant disciplinary differences.

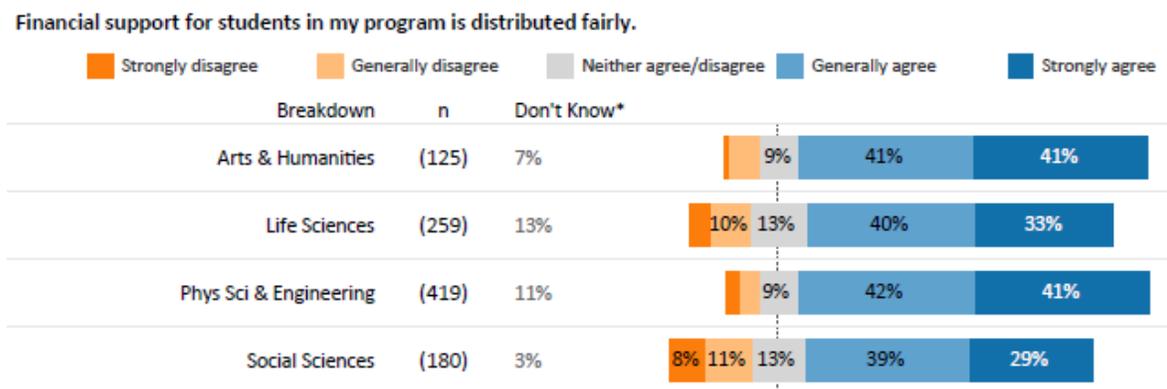
On “my program supports students in pursuing career interests in academia”, respondents in the Arts & Humanities were most likely to agree (93% generally or strongly agree), followed by the Life Sciences (91%); Physical Sciences & Engineering respondents were the least likely to agree (84%), although still a strong majority.

On “my program’s procedures are fair and equitable to all”, respondents in the Physical Sciences & Engineering were the most likely to agree (77% generally or strongly agree), followed by the Life Sciences (75%); respondents in Arts & Humanities and the Life Sciences agreed in equal proportions (68%).

As illustrated in the chart that follows, there were substantial differences between the disciplines on “my program supports students in pursuing career interests outside of academia, such as in industry, business, government, or the non-profit sector”. There was not a high level of agreement (generally or strongly agree) with this statement within any of the disciplines; however, greater proportions of respondents in the Life Sciences (68%) and Physical Sciences & Engineering (58%) agreed, relative to those in the Social Sciences (45%) and Arts & Humanities (27%). As indicated earlier, the Graduate School is partnering with Cornell Career Services to expand doctoral career development programs to address this need. This topic is also addressed in biennial graduate field meetings with each Director of Graduate Studies.



As illustrated in the chart that follows, the disciplinary differences on “financial support for students in my program is distributed fairly” were also pronounced; sizable proportions of respondents in the Social Sciences (19%) and in the Life Sciences (14%) disagreed with this statement.

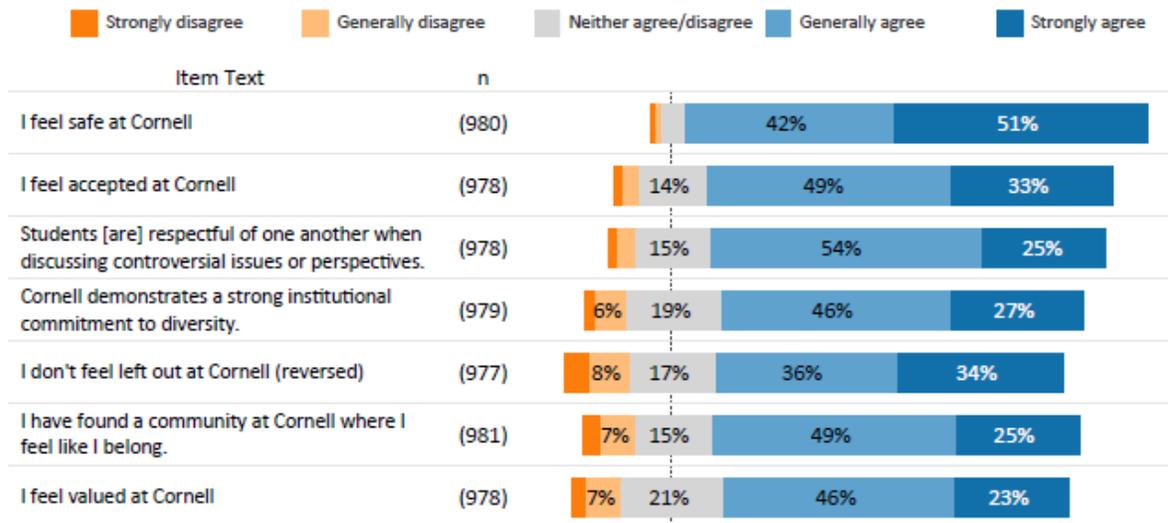


Campus Climate

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with a series of statements regarding campus climate. Responses were collected on a 5-point scale where 1 was “strongly disagree”, 3 was “neither agree nor disagree”, and 5 was “strongly agree”. The chart that follows shows the distribution of responses; items are displayed in descending order based on the mean rating.

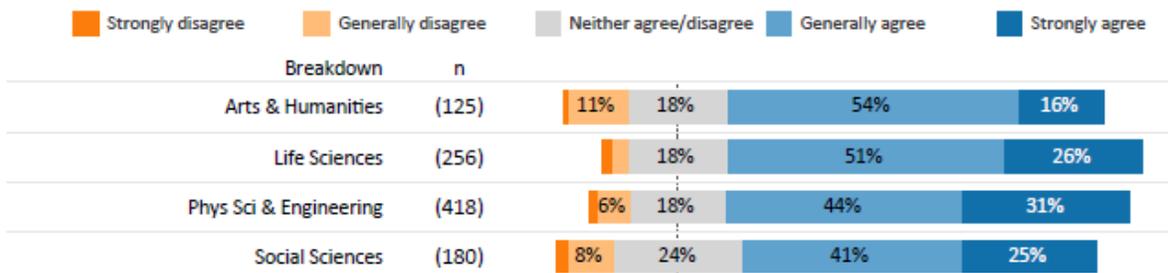
Campus Climate

Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding campus climate:

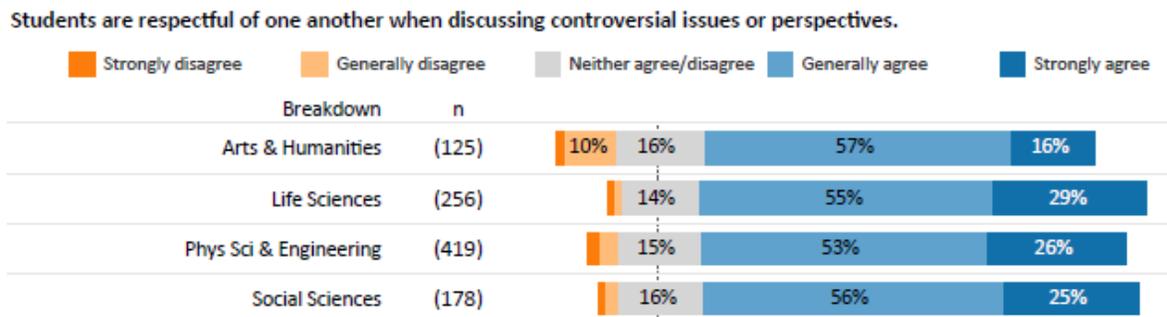


There were statistically significant differences between the disciplines on the statement “*Cornell demonstrates a strong institutional commitment to diversity*”; as shown in the chart that follows, larger proportions of respondents in the Life Sciences and Physical Sciences & Engineering agreed (generally or strongly agreed), relative to those in the Social Sciences and Arts & Humanities.

Cornell demonstrates a strong institutional commitment to diversity.



There were also significant differences between the disciplines on “*students here are respectful of one another when discussing controversial issues or perspectives*”. As shown in the chart that follows, respondents in the Life Sciences were most likely to agree (generally or strongly agree) with this statement while those in the Arts & Humanities were the least likely to agree.



Statistically significant differences were also evident in responses to the following items in this section:

“I have found a community at Cornell where I feel like I belong”; respondents in Physical Sciences & Engineering were most likely to agree (76% generally or strongly agree) and those in Arts & Humanities were least likely to agree (71%).

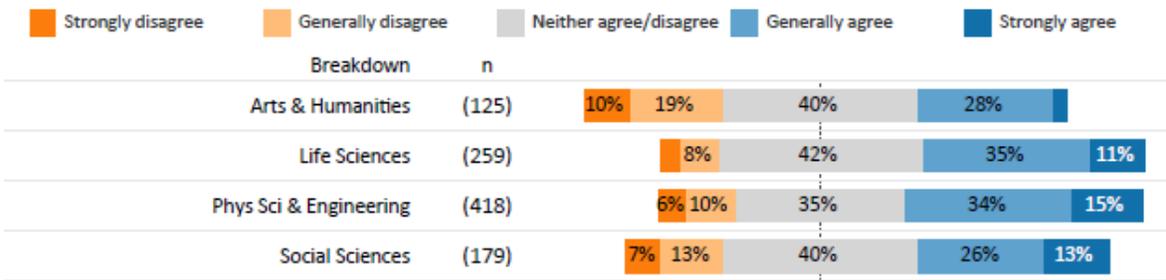
“I feel safe at Cornell”; respondents in the Life Sciences were most likely to agree (96% generally or strongly agree) and those in the Arts & Humanities were least likely to agree (86%).

“I feel accepted at Cornell”; respondents in the Social Sciences were most likely to agree (84% generally or strongly agree) and those in the Arts & Humanities were least likely to agree (71%).

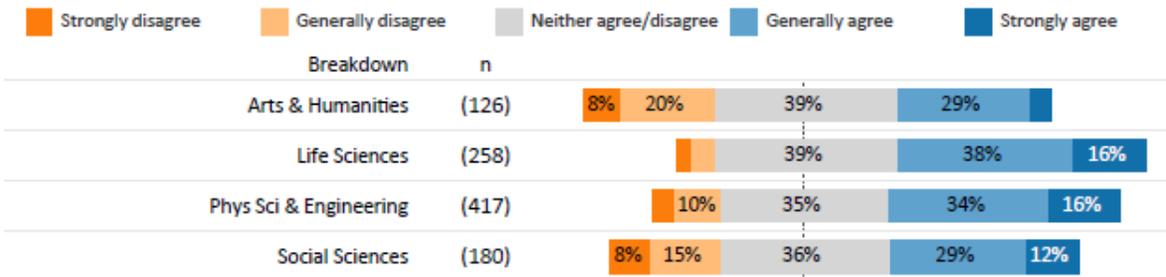
Student Representation

On three items dealing with student representation, a substantial proportion of respondents (35% to 49%) choose the neutral response option, “neither agree nor disagree”. There were significant differences between disciplines on all three of these items, with a similar pattern: respondents in the Life Sciences were the most likely to agree, followed by those in the Physical Sciences & Engineering; respondents in the Social Sciences and Arts & Humanities were the least likely to agree.

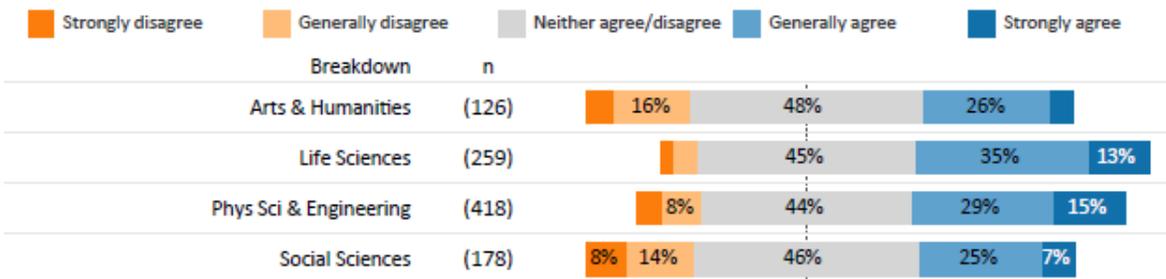
The senior leadership at Cornell is committed to addressing issues of importance to graduate students



The Graduate School serves as an advocate for graduate students at Cornell



The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly effectively represents the concerns of graduate students

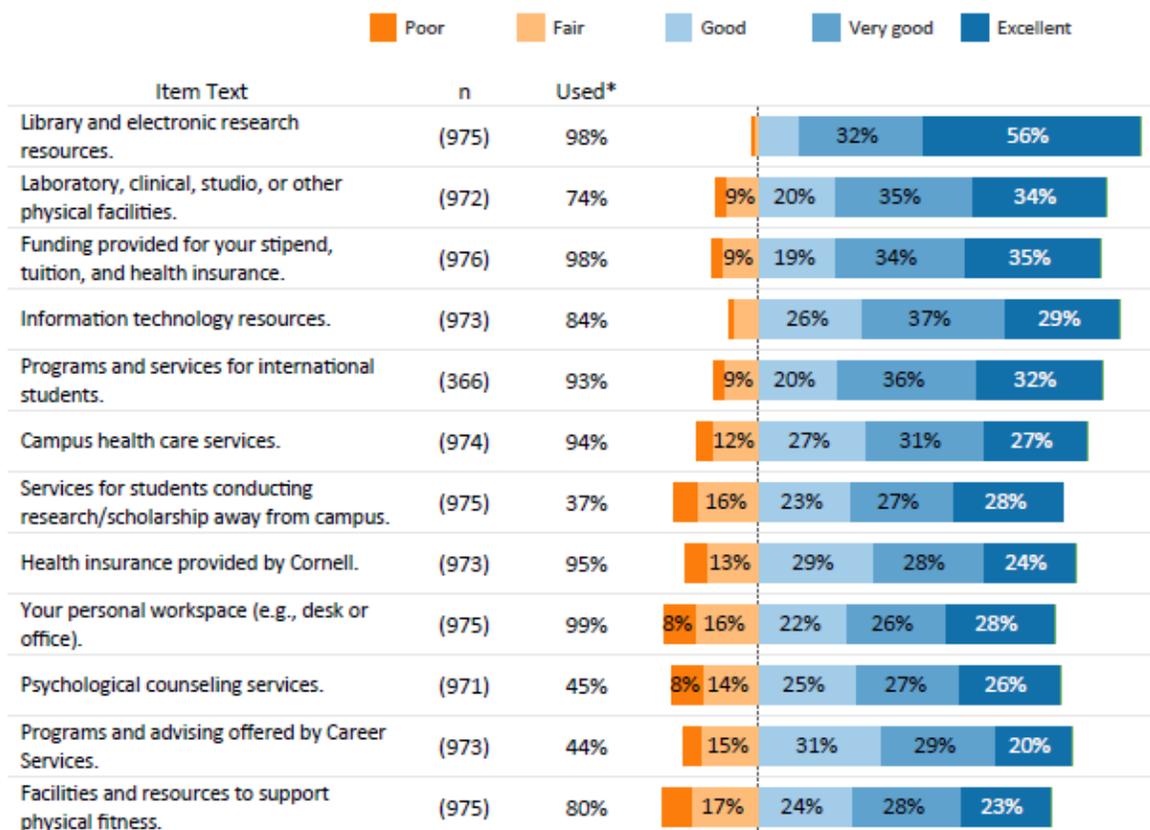


Resources and Services

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of 12 resources and services provided by Cornell. Responses were collected on a 5-point scale that ranged from poor to excellent. The chart below shows response distributions for each of these items at the level of the Graduate School.

Resources & Services

Rate the quality of the following resources and services provided by Cornell.



* Calculations for bars charts based on the percent that indicated that they "used" the resource or service.

Two of the most highly rated items, "library and electronic research resources" (98% positive) and "funding provided for your stipend, tuition, and health insurance" (88% positive) were also items where almost all respondents indicated that they used the resource.

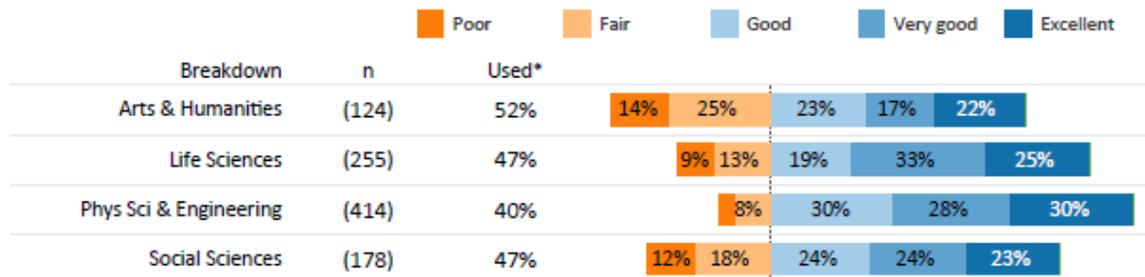
The fifth item listed in the chart, "Programs and services for international students", was only displayed if the survey respondent was an international student (93% of the international student respondents indicated that they used these programs/services)

There were significant differences between disciplines in ratings of "funding provided for your tuition, stipend, and health insurance", with fewer positive ratings in Social Sciences, relative to the other disciplines.

There were significant differences between disciplines in ratings of "psychological counseling services", shown in the chart that follows. Overall, about 45% of respondents reported using psychological counseling services. The same overall pattern of significant disciplinary differences is repeated for two other items in this section: "laboratory, clinical, studio, or other facilities" and

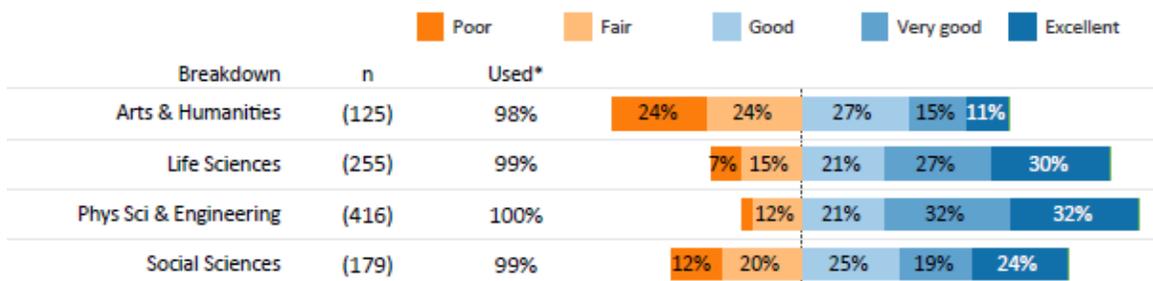
“your personal workspace”. In all three instances, Physical Sciences & Engineering is the most positive, followed by Life Sciences, then Social Sciences, then Arts & Humanities.

Psychological counseling services.



Two of the items with statistically significant differences between disciplines - “psychological counseling services” (shown in the chart above) and “your personal workspace” (shown in the chart that follows) – were the third and fourth lowest rated, respectively.

Your personal workspace (e.g., desk or office).



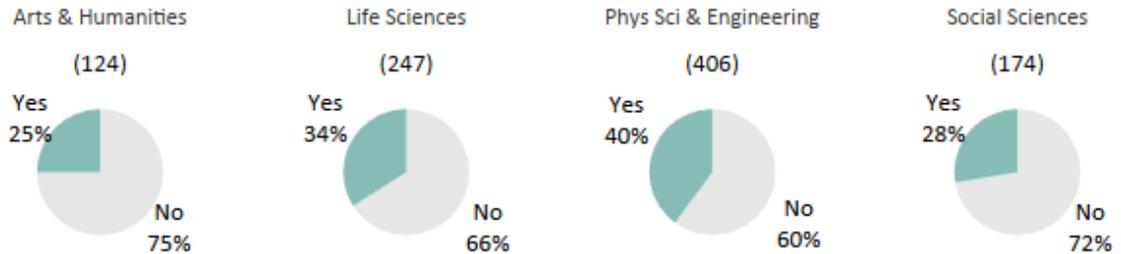
Despite having the lowest rating overall, “facilities and resources to support physical fitness”, was still rated positively by three-quarters of the respondents.

Career Plans

Respondents were asked whether their career goals have changed substantially since entering their doctoral program. Those who responded “yes” were then asked to identify the most significant factors that influenced the change, with multiple selections permitted. The charts below show how students from each discipline responded to these questions. The pie charts show the percent of respondents in each discipline who reported substantial change in their career goals. For those who

indicated that their career goals had changed (i.e., those who answered “yes” to the first question), the bar charts show items indicated as significant factors that influenced the change.

Have your career goals changed substantially since entering your doctoral program?



For students whose career goals have changed: **What are the most significant factors that influenced change in your career goals?** (Check all that apply)

	Arts & Humanities (31)	Life Sciences (84)	Phys Sci & Engineering (162)	Social Sciences (48)
Quality of life (e.g., hours, location, work environment).	74%	69%	64%	65%
Developed new interests.	55%	54%	51%	56%
New information about career options available to me.	35%	45%	42%	38%
Family, health, or other personal considerations.	45%	48%	28%	38%
Limited job opportunities in my prior area of interest.	84%	33%	22%	46%
Income or advancement opportunities.	35%	21%	24%	40%
Other factors.	19%	12%	15%	17%
A particular employment opportunity.	13%	10%	16%	8%
Need for work authorization.	13%	11%	5%	6%

Respondents were asked to indicate which employer type(s) most closely align with their current career goals. Response options included: “education”, “for-profit business, industry or corporation”, “government”, “non-profit organization or NGO”, “self-employment”, and “other”. Multiple selections were permitted. The results by discipline, are shown in the chart that follows.

Which employer types(s) most closely align with your current career goals? (Check all that apply)

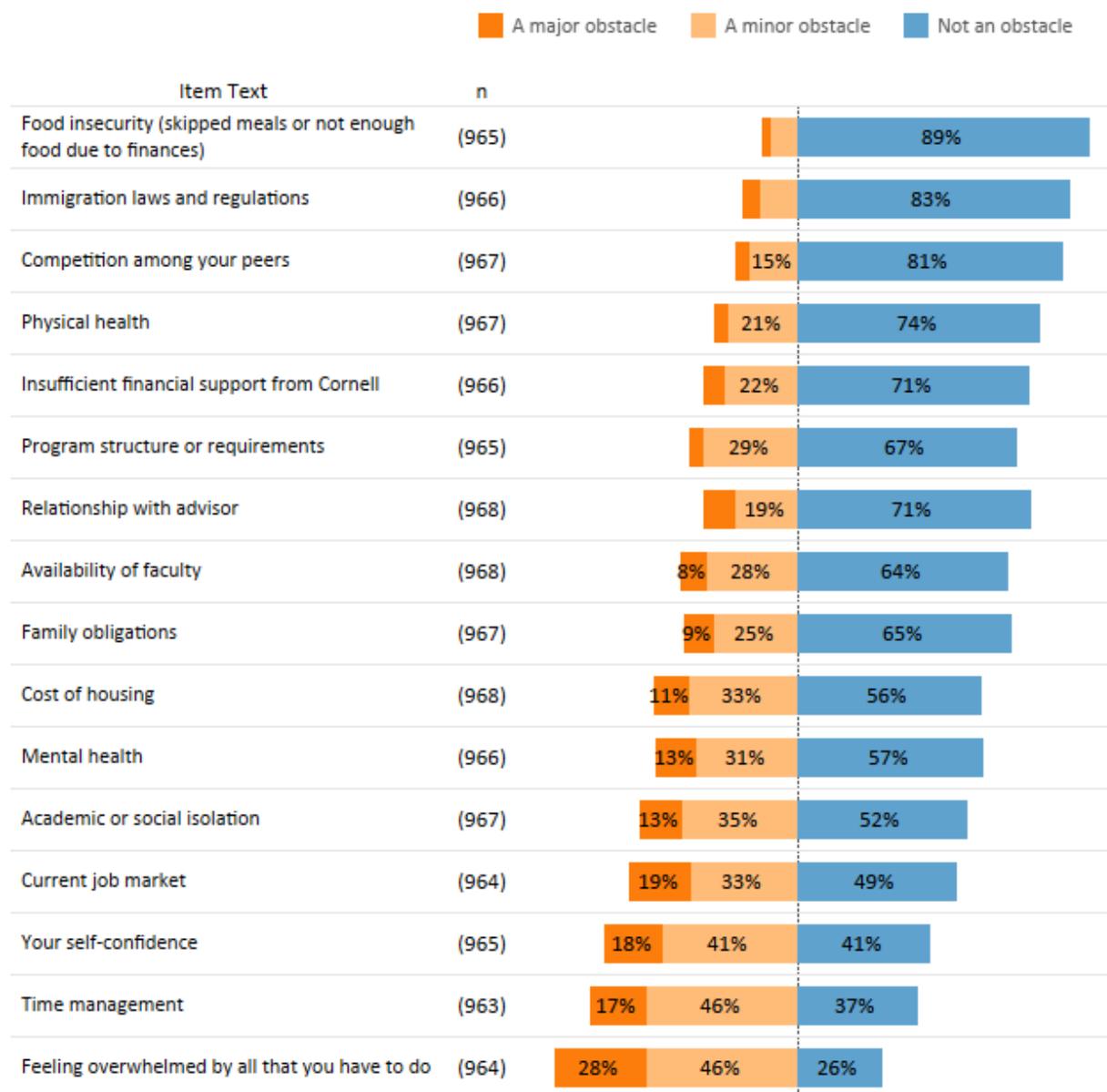
	Arts & Humanities (126)	Life Sciences (258)	Phys Sci & Engineering (421)	Social Sciences (182)
Education	95%	76%	56%	81%
For-Profit Business, Industry or Corporation	16%	41%	67%	31%
Government	15%	38%	32%	37%
Non-Profit Organization or NGO	31%	31%	17%	28%
Self-Employment	13%	14%	12%	8%
Other	2%	2%	2%	2%

Obstacles to Success

Respondents were presented with a list of 16 factors and asked to indicate the extent to which each was an obstacle to their academic progress in the last year. Responses were collected on a 3-point scale where 1 = a major obstacle, 2 = a minor obstacle, and 3 = not an obstacle. The response distributions are shown in the chart that follows; items are displayed in descending order based on the mean.

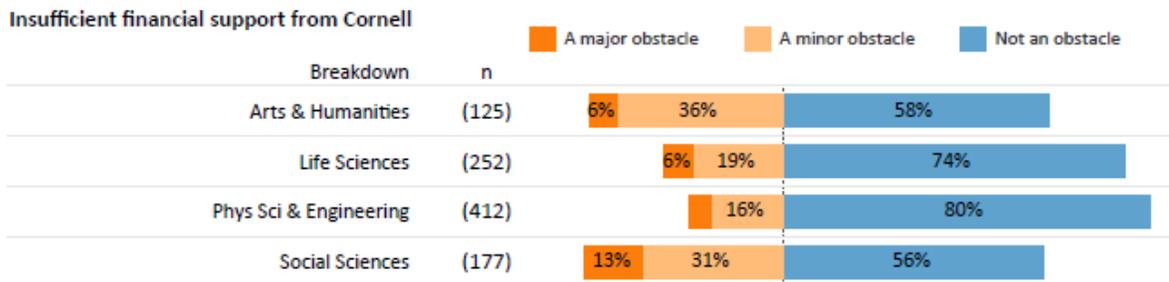
Obstacles to Academic Success

Students were asked the extent to which each of the following were obstacles to their academic progress in the last year. (Some items only appeared in 2017 survey)



Of the potential obstacles listed, “*food insecurity (skipped meals or not enough to eat due to finances)*” was the item least frequently cited; however, it was reported to be a major or minor obstacle for about one in ten respondents.

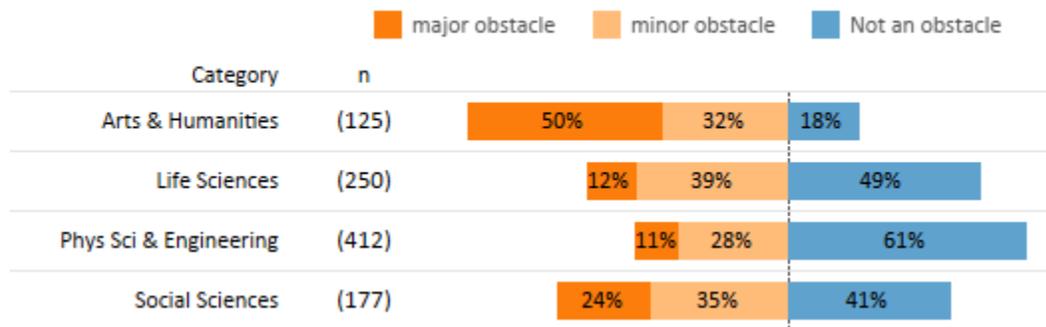
As illustrated in the chart that follows, there were pronounced differences between the disciplines on the item “*insufficient financial support from Cornell*”; respondents in the Physical Sciences and Engineering and Life Sciences were relatively less likely to rate it as an obstacle.



Only a quarter of respondents indicated that “*feeling overwhelmed by all that you have to do*” was not an obstacle. The items “*Time management*” and “*your self-confidence*” were also cited as obstacles by the majority of respondents.

The obstacle with the most pronounced difference between disciplines was “*current job market*”, with just 18% of respondents in the Arts & Humanities indicating that this was not an obstacle, compared to 61% of respondents from Physical Sciences and Engineering.

2017 results: *Current job market*



Overall, the proportion of respondents indicating that “*current job market*” was not an obstacle decreased from 58% in 2015 to 49% in 2017. The chart that follows shows the overall results for each survey year.

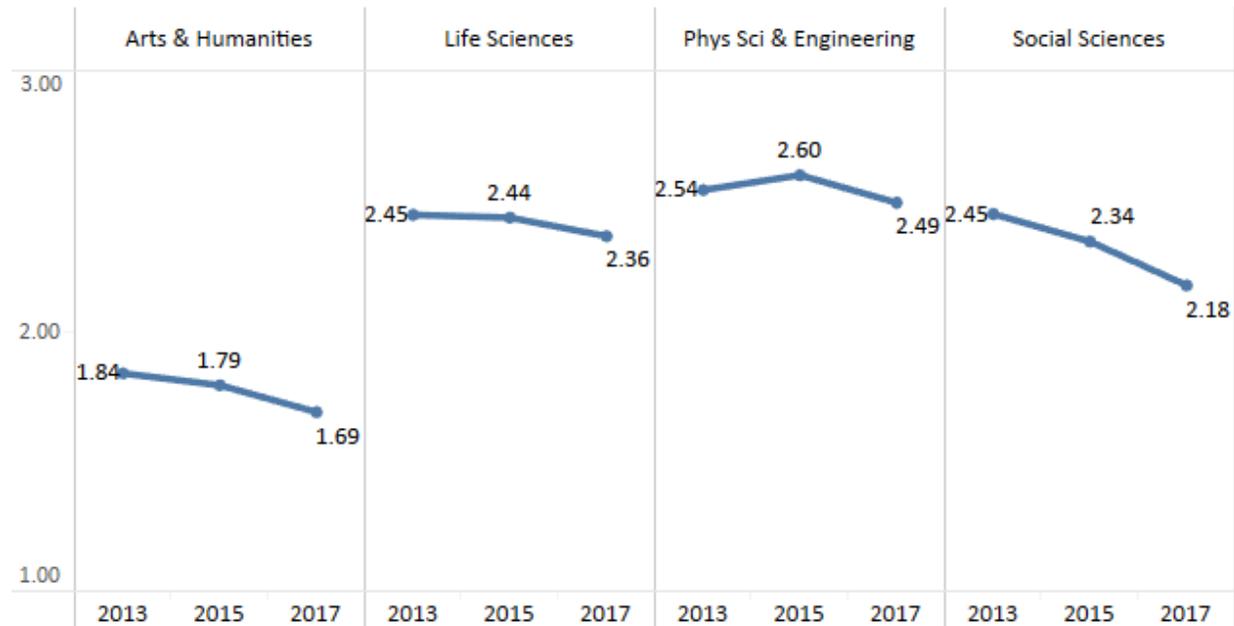
Results across survey years: *Current job market*



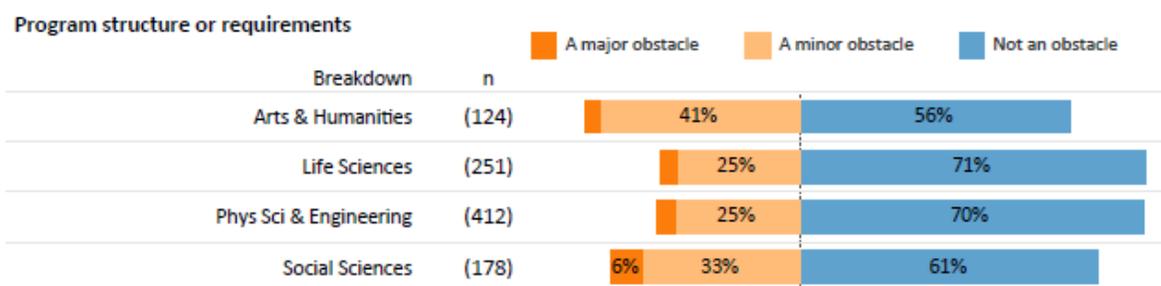
The chart that follows shows the downward shift in mean responses within each discipline as smaller proportions of students report that the "*current job market*" is not an obstacle.

Mean response over time: *Current job market*

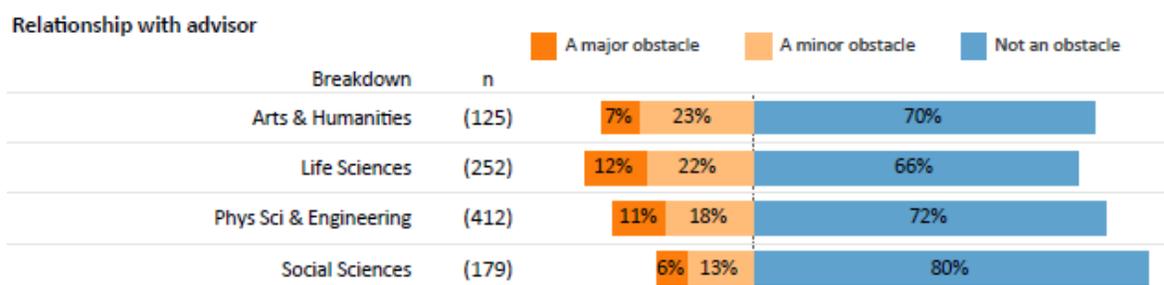
(1 = major obstacle, 2 = minor obstacle, and 3 = not an obstacle)



There are seven items in this section with statistically significant differences between disciplines, and most (with one exception, noted below) follow a similar pattern: a larger proportion of respondents from Arts & Humanities and Social Sciences cite the item as an obstacle, as compared to respondents from the Life Sciences and Physical Sciences & Engineering. This pattern can be observed in responses to "*program structure or requirements*", as illustrated in the chart that follows. A similar pattern of disciplinary differences is apparent for the items, "*insufficient financial support from Cornell*", "*your self-confidence*", "*cost of housing*", "*family obligations*", and "*current job market*".



One item with statistically significant differences between disciplines that follows a different response pattern from that above, is *“relationship with advisor”*, shown below. This reflects to some degree the pattern of responses on two other advising-related items in the Advising and Mentoring section with statistically significant differences, *“my advisor gives me constructive feedback on my work”* and *“my advisor promotes my professional development”*.



The proportion of respondents citing certain items as obstacles has increased significantly since 2013: *“cost of housing”*, *“academic or social isolation”*, and *“job market”*. The proportion of respondents indicating that *“family obligations”* were an obstacle decreased significantly during this same time period.

Notes on Items related to Financial Support

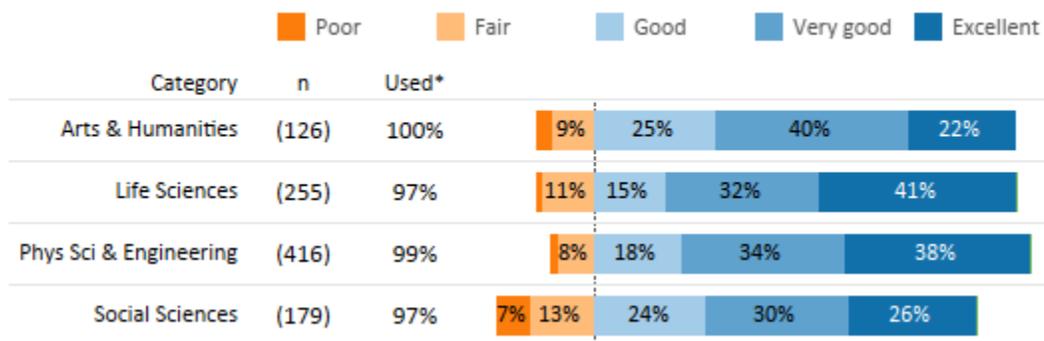
Questions regarding satisfaction with financial support and funding were asked in three different sections of the survey: Program Climate, Resources & Services, and Obstacles to Academic Success. On all three items, there were significant differences between the disciplines, with the proportion of positive responses being highest in the Physical Science & Engineering and lowest in the Social Sciences.

In the Resources and Services section of the survey, respondents were asked to rate the “*funding provided for your stipend, tuition, and health insurance*”; overall, 88% of respondents gave a positive response (good, very good, or excellent).

Although only 12% of respondents rated “*funding provided for your stipend, tuition, and health insurance*” as poor or fair, 29% indicated (in the obstacles to success section) that “*insufficient financial support from Cornell*” was a major or minor obstacle. The disjuncture between funding satisfaction and funding as an obstacle is apparent in all disciplines, although it is most pronounced in the Arts & Humanities.

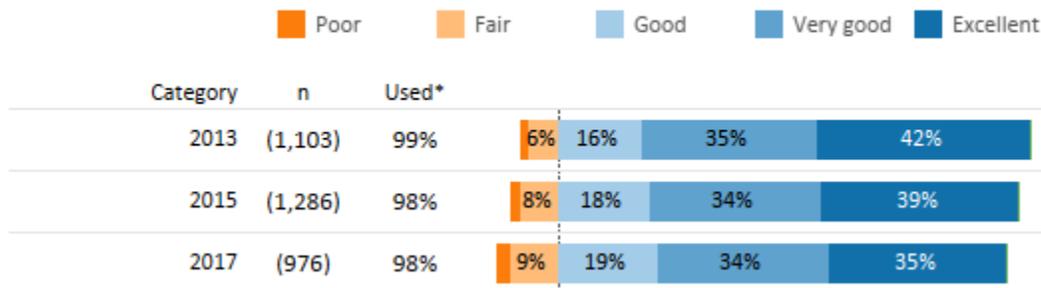
As shown in the chart that follows, there were significant differences between the disciplines on ratings of funding, with a smaller proportion of positive ratings in the Social Sciences, compared to the other disciplines.

2017 results: Funding provided for your stipend, tuition, and health insurance.



Overall, the percent of positive responses (good, very good, or excellent) decreased from 93% in 2013 to 88% 2017. The chart that follows shows the overall results for each survey year.

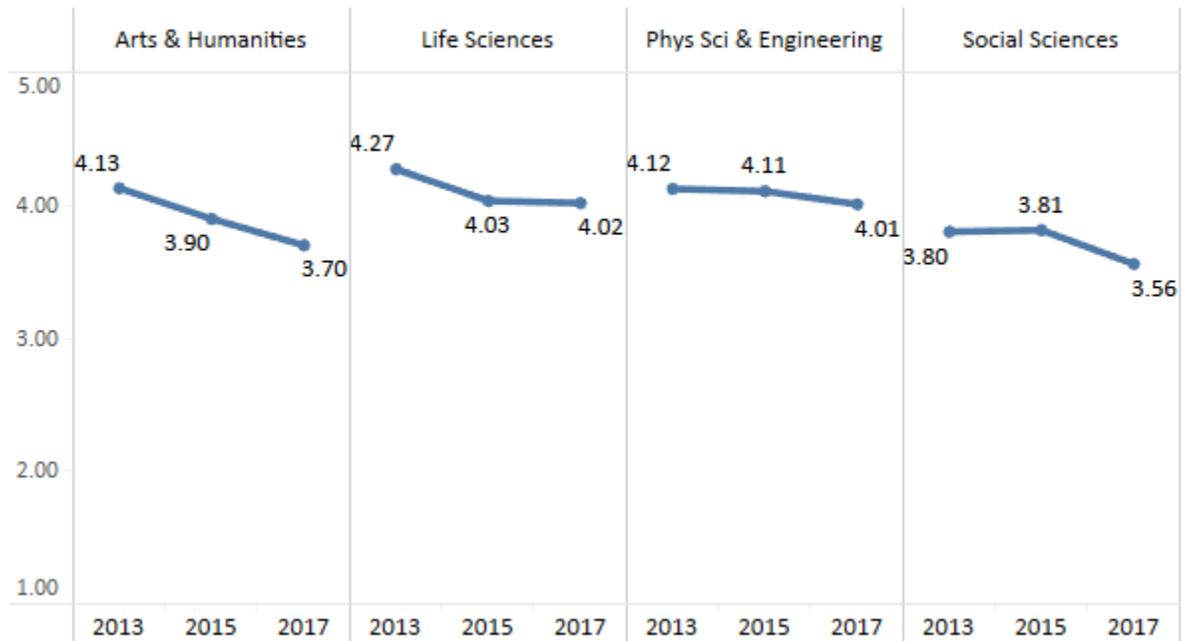
Results across survey years: Funding provided for your stipend, tuition, and health insurance.



The chart that follows shows a downward shift in the mean rating within each discipline, as relatively smaller proportions of students give positive responses to “funding provided for your stipend, tuition, and health insurance”.

Mean response over time: *Funding provided for your stipend, tuition, and health insurance.*

(1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good, 5 = excellent)



Conclusion

These results from the Doctoral Experience Survey provide insights into the doctoral student experience within the Graduate School and graduate disciplines (i.e., Arts & Humanities, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences & Engineering, and Social Sciences). This survey, along with the four other [student and alumni surveys](#) regularly administered by the Graduate School, informs the design and development of programs that support graduate student success.

While this report offers a summary of results from each survey section, it does not provide an analysis of related contextual factors or comparative data. Future plans include expanded analysis of select survey topics (e.g., career and professional development, advising and mentoring), and a comparison of results across demographic groups (e.g., based on gender, ethnicity, and citizenship).