

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke Student Success Study Report

2010-2011

SPONSORED BY THE OFFICE OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

August 12, 2011

Study conducted and report authored by: Beverly R. King, PhD, Office of Institutional Effectiveness

Questions should be directed to Dr. King at beverly.king@uncp.edu

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke Student Success Study Report

2010-2011

Background

Between the months of April and August, 2010, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) conducted a study of students at UNCP to determine factors influencing student success. The primary investigator was Dr. Beverly King, Assistant Vice Chancellor for IE; she was aided by student assistants: Ms. Chalonda Coleman, graduate student in the department of Social Work (spring 2010); Mr. Arjay Quizon, undergraduate PURC/NASNTI research assistant (summer 2010); and Ms. Brittany Locklear, graduate student in Education (Fall, 2010). Three methods for obtaining information from current and former students were utilized: telephone interviews, online surveys, and focus groups. All data collection was complete by the end of July, 2010. Few telephone interviews were obtained (13, all undergraduates); this was disappointing because telephone was the primary contact method to be used for reaching former students. However, the study was completed with almost 900 online survey participants (155 graduate students and 736 undergraduates) and almost 60 focus group participants (17 graduate students and 39 undergraduates). The primary results are presented in this report separated by level (graduate and undergraduate) as well as by methodology (online survey and focus groups). Graduate and undergraduate students received different forms of the online survey; focus group questions were, for the most part, the same for both groups. Most of the questions in the online survey were open-ended and produced a massive amount of information. Highlights are given below; more detail in the form of anonymous responses is available from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Copies of the online surveys are included in the appendix to this report. Percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Graduate Students

Survey

Of the 155 survey respondents, 49% were in a School of Education graduate program, 25% in the MPA program, 13% in the MSW program, and 6% in the MBA program. In terms of admission status, 81% of respondents were full admits; 17% were provisional admits; and 2% were unsure of their status. Thirty-nine percent anticipated finishing their degree requirements in 2010; 26% in 2011; 25% in 2012; and 6% in 2013. One person anticipated finishing in 2014; two in 2015; and one in 2016. Only one person said they definitely would not complete a degree program at UNCP; 85% said they definitely would and 15% said they probably would. The most common age category for respondents was 26-30

(21%) followed by 36-40 (17%), 20-25 (15%), 31-35 (14%), 41-45 (13%), 51-55 (9%), 46-50 (7%), and over 55 (5%). Females were more like to respond than males—70% vs. 30%. Echoing the diversity in race/ethnicity in the university as a whole, 52% of respondents were Euro-American; 26% were American Indian; 15%, African American; 3% each, Asian and Multi-Racial; and 1% Hispanic.

Reasons graduate students chose to attend UNCP (students could choose more than one response)

Response	Frequency
Location	74%
Affordability	69%
Availability of programs/courses	56%
Reputation of program	37%
Quality/reputation of faculty	33%
Friends attended UNCP	22%
Welcoming campus	19%
Admission requirements	14%
Financial aid opportunities	14%
Family members attended UNCP	12%
Quality facilities/campus appearance	12%
Campus diversity	5%
Campus safety	4%

Reasons graduate students have remained at UNCP (could choose more than one response)

Response	Frequency
Meeting educational goals	81%
Meeting personal goals	75%
Affordability	59%
Location	53%
Quality of instruction	49%
Investment time/money	41%

Relationship with advisor	39%
Enthusiasm/helpfulness of faculty	39%
Accessibility of courses	30%
Other students/peers	27%
Helpful academic advising	25%
Welcoming/helpful atmosphere in campus offices	19%
Financial aid opportunities	13%
Meeting expectations family/friends	13%
Quality of facilities	13%
Campus diversity	7%
Campus safety	6%

Reasons graduate students have taken a semester off with intention of returning

Response	Frequency
Never took semester off	79%
Job	5%
Family	4%
Medical	4%
Financial	3%
Personal	2%
Difficulty getting courses	2%
Academic difficulties	1%
Underpreparedness for graduate work	0%

Reasons graduate students ever considered withdrawing completely (with no intention to return)

Response	Frequency
Never considered leaving	78%
Difficulty getting courses	7%

Family	4%
Personal	4%
Job	2%
Underpreparedness for graduate work	2%
Financial	1%
Medical	1%
Academic difficulties	0%

Percentage of courses in graduate program taken online

Response	Frequency
Never taken any	20%
10% or fewer	25%
About a third	26%
50%	8%
About two-thirds	3%
About three-fourths	9%
100%	9%

Percentage of courses in graduate program taken at off-campus site

Response	Frequency
Never taken any	69%
10% or fewer	15%
About a third	6%
50%	2%
About two-thirds	1%
About three-fourths	2%
100%	5%

Hours work for pay per week

Response	Frequency
0	13%
1-10	5%
11-20	11%
21-30	5%
31-40	20%
41 or more	46%

Rating of faculty with regard to their contribution to success in graduate program

Response	Frequency
Excellent	44%
More than adequate	23%
Adequate	19%
Disappointing	5%
Very disappointing	5%
Not sure or prefer not to rate	3%

Focus groups

Despite the difficulty of getting students to show up for focus groups, 17 graduate students did attend a session. Four of these attended sessions which were a mix of both undergraduates and graduate students; 13 attended a graduate student only focus group. Students were presented with a few basic questions in a semi-structured format. The “starter” questions inquired about reasons for choosing UNCP, reasons for staying at UNCP, what students liked and disliked about the university, and experiences with campus offices, departments, and courses. Focus group notes were taken by both Dr. King and a research assistant.

Student comments related to why they chose to attend UNCP and why they stay here echoed responses to the online survey. Students who live close by the university appreciate the availability and convenience. Low cost was a prime attractant; several students who commuted from a distance said

they did so because it was more economically feasible for them to do so than to attend a university closer to home (e.g., in the Research Triangle area). Several students had attended UNCP as undergrads and therefore were familiar with the school; several had had family members attend as well so there were family ties to the university. Students also expressed an appreciation for the small, peaceful campus; available resources (such as the library and computer labs); small class size; friendly atmosphere; diversity; and personable, caring faculty. Comments about faculty included “[they] want you to succeed in life”; “[they] treat you with respect”; “[they] take time for you”; “[they] give you advice as a person who has gone through what you are going through”; “they all love what they do!”; “professors go out of their way to make sure that all students understand.”

Some of the things students would change about the graduate school and/or programs included the following:

- More core courses in the summer rather than mainly electives;
- More day-time courses as the number of full-time, traditional graduate students increase;
- More positive advertising about the school to overcome negative stigma and attitudes among those who don’t really know the school (e.g., that UNCP is easier than other schools; that you come to UNCP if you can’t go elsewhere; that UNCP is just a “country hick school”);
- More activities for night students, e.g., a social support group to give grad students an opportunity to network;
- Greater rigor in courses (a number of comments were made related to this issue; these are paraphrased below):
 - I was an undergrad at UNCP; many of my grad courses are exact repeats of undergraduate courses. I learned more in the undergraduate versions; some grad courses are not challenging enough. In fact, I had more challenging classes in high school.
 - I’ve been in 14 grad courses at UNCP; out of all of them, I’ve had only two classes that did not have open-book tests or didn’t allow the use of notes on tests. Both of the more rigorous tests were in one class. I feel that in every class I have taken, the subject matter was taught in a manner that was just about high school.
 - Graduate students should learn tools, not specifics.
 - I have not had a class in my grad program that required reading professional journal articles; I have not had to write a paper longer than 10 pages.
- Greater consistency;

- across departments in terms of advising and procedures.
- within departments in terms of requirements and mandatory courses (for program completion).
- in terms of cost across types of courses (online versus F2F).
- in communication (don't send a letter about one thing and an e-mail about something related—use one or the other as the sole means of communication).
- among offices—make sure that offices know what each other are doing.
- Adding a public transit system within Pembroke or Robeson county;
- Lowering the expense of textbooks (one student commented that faculty should be thinking about students when they make decisions about books);
- Easier ways of doing internships for students employed full-time with families;
- Having faculty think about student circumstances when planning courses (e.g., one student commented that she had to drive from Raleigh to attend a 1-hour class as part of a field experience or internship. If this was placed online, it would save so much time and money); and
- Making sure that staff are never rude with students and can work with all types of people.

Finally, students were asked about how they balance academics with work and home and family.

Their strategies and advice to other potential graduate students included the following:

- Get some relaxation; do some things where you don't have to think.
- Realize the importance of home and family. You have to have a support system, e.g., spouse, parents, children. You have to know that your family won't be upset if you don't cook one night or forget to make an appointment.
- Have a plan. Know that some things may have to change (e.g., changing to a different shift at work) and that you have to let some things go (e.g., housework). If things come up, go talk to the professors.

Undergraduate Students

Survey

Of the 736 undergraduate respondents to the online survey, 20% were currently in their first year of attendance at UNCP with other classes represented as follows: Sophomores, 17%; Juniors, 27%; Seniors, 30%; Non-degree students, 5%. Seventy-five percent of participants were female and the average age was 29 (with a range of 17 to 62). Almost a third of responding students were the first in their families to attend college (27%). Almost two-thirds (62%) lived with family (parents, children,

and/or significant other). Just as with graduate students, racial/ethnic representation was similar to that in the university as a whole. The largest category was Euro-American (41%) followed, in order of frequency, by African American (28%), American Indian (15%), Asian and Multi-racial (5% each), Hispanic (4%), and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (1%). When asked if they planned to finish a degree program at UNCP, 93% indicated that they definitely or probably would. For those who did not plan to do so, the primary reasons given were: Degrees/programs/majors/courses not available; transfer; bored (or not enough to do in area); not happy (or general dislike); and finances. Ninety-two percent of the students agreed that a college degree is essential in this economic climate. (One student noted that a college degree is essential in any economic climate.)

Reasons under graduate students chose to attend UNCP (students could choose more than one response)

Response	Frequency
Location	68%
Affordability	64%
Availability of programs/courses	58%
Financial aid opportunities	33%
Welcoming campus atmosphere	27%
Quality instruction/reputation faculty	24%
Friends attended UNCP	20%
Admission requirements	19%
Campus diversity	19%
Quality facilities/campus appearance	19%
Family members attended UNCP	16%
Campus safety	9%

Reasons undergraduate students have remained at UNCP (could choose more than one response)

Response	Frequency
Meeting educational goals	71%
Meeting personal goals	58%

Affordability	56%
Location	55%
Quality of instruction	40%
Enthusiasm/helpfulness of faculty	39%
Investment time/money	37%
Financial aid opportunities	35%
Helpful academic advising	31%
Meeting expectations family/friends	28%
Quality of facilities	26%
Other students/peers	24%
Welcoming/helpful atmosphere campus offices	23%
Campus diversity	17%
Extracurricular activities (e.g., athletics, clubs)	15%
Campus safety	11%
Enrichment activities (e.g., service learning)	7%

Reasons taken a semester off with intention of returning

Response	Frequency
Never took semester off	80%
Job	4%
Family	4%
Personal	4%
Financial	2%
Medical	2%
Transferred	2%
Academic difficulties	2%
Difficulties adjusting to college	1%

Reasons considered withdrawing completely (with no intention to return)

Response	Frequency
Never considered leaving	62%
To transfer	10%
Personal	7%
Financial	5%
Academic difficulties	4%
Family	3%
Job	3%
Difficulties adjusting to college	2%
Underpreparedness	1%

Reasons believe other students have left

Response	Frequency
To transfer	25%
Personal	19%
Academic difficulties	18%
Difficulties adjusting to college	14%
Financial	10%
Family	6%
Job	5%
Medical	3%

If you are employed, how do you balance work & school?

Almost 60% indicated they were employed; the top 10 themes of how they balance work & school were:

- Time management
- Creative scheduling
- Light work load or light course load

Online or night courses
 Organization/planning
 Prioritizing
 Support (from employer or family)
 Commitment/dedication/determination/will power
 Discipline/hard work
 On-campus employment/work study

Rating of faculty with regard to their contribution to undergraduate student success

Response	Frequency
Excellent	33%
More than adequate	31%
Adequate	28%
Disappointing	5%
Very disappointing	1%
Not sure or prefer not to rate	2%

One most important factor that has enriched your education at UNCP & made you a successful student

Top 12 response categories	Frequency
Faculty (helpful, caring, knowledgeable, etc.; quality instruction; challenging courses)	36%
Small class size & possibility of one-on-one interaction with instructors	14%
Self (determination or behaviors such as attending class/studying)	12%
Choices in/variety of courses (e.g., DE/night/online)	7%
Resources (DSS, tutoring, SI, Career center, library)	5%
Advising/advisors (on/off campus sites & CAE)	5%
Staff (helpfulness, etc.)	4%

Other students/peers	3%
Extracurricular experiences/involvement	3%
General atmosphere (inviting, fun, conducive to learning, etc.)	2%
Diversity	2%
Environment (clean, nice campus/rural setting/few distractions)	2%

One thing you would change about UNCP that would enrich your educational experience and make you a more successful student

Top 15 response categories	Frequency
Faculty/instruction (e.g., more applied, etc.)	14%
Nothing	13%
Alternative course types: Night/online/DE/Sat./short terms (changes in, scheduling of, more available, etc.)	8%
Class selection & scheduling (number, hours available, etc.)	7%
Activities/events (on/off campus)	5%
Classroom & university policy/procedures	5%
Affordability/costs/financial aid/scholarships	5%
Office/staff improvement	4%
Tutoring/SI (e.g., more)	4%
Advising & registration	3%
Programs/majors/degrees (number, changes in, more off-site, etc.)	3%
More attention to special groups of students (e.g., Non-traditional, veterans, commuting, Native American)	2%
Lower standards, less challenging courses	2%
Housing	2%
Location & resources in area	2%

One of the final questions on the current undergraduate student online survey asked students to indicate (with comments) whether several offices and programs at UNCP had enhanced or limited their educational experience. Those listed were: General education, Financial aid, Tutoring, Career services, Counseling and testing, Library, Bookstore, Student health services, Residence Life, Campus security services, Athletic program, Admissions, Registration, Academic advising, Recreation and intramural programs, Social/cultural/artistics programs, Student organizations and clubs, and Disability support services. Anonymous results have been shared with the respective units within the university. Two broad-based programs are discussed below. More detail about responses for this question (as well as all others on the survey) can be obtained from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

General Education

Of 323 interpretable responses concerning general education, 67% were positive and 26% were negative. (The remaining 7% were neutral.) In addition to *Enhanced*, positive adjectives or phrases used to describe UNCP's general education program, courses, and instructors included *Helped (me find a major)*, *Excellent*, *Great*, *Good*, *Enjoyed*, *Fun*, *Broadened (my horizons)*, *Well-rounded*, *Knowledge base (increased)*, *Informative*, *Foundational*, *Interesting*, *Loved*, *Liked*, *Needed*, *Useful*, *Appreciate*, *Encouraged*, and *Opportunity*. On the negative side, the most frequent comments indicated that students thought general education courses were a *Waste of time*, *Pointless*, *Unnecessary*, *Useless*, *Not helpful*, *Annoying*, or *Boring*. The next more frequent category of negative responses included those about changes needed in the general education program (e.g., *More choices*, *Fewer required*, *Fewer students in courses*, *Instructor issues*, *Decrease difficulty*, and *Increase difficulty*). Illustrative comments, both positive and negative, are given below.

Positive comment examples

- My Gen Ed classes taught me to open my eyes and mind to more things.
- Gen Ed classes enhance the educational experience by providing diversity; you get to network and interact with people outside your curriculum.
- They have enhanced my education by showing me what I enjoy learning about.
- Some of my best (and most challenging) classes were "general ed." classes. I think that students should not dread these courses, but should treat them as learning opportunities from which to grow.
- Has helped me become more open-minded.

- Helped me get my foot in the door with college life. Helped prepare me for the harder courses I now take.
- General education course are helping me to decide what subjects I like and dislike, which will help me choose my major.
- It helped me learn to study.
- Most are helpful towards preparing you for the work your major will require.
- Opened my eyes to things I did not know and helped to prepare me for my major.
- I feel these courses are definitely needed to prepare us for meeting the world when we leave school.
- As the statement reads - we are given an opportunity to increase our knowledge in all areas - not just our major.
- Nice refresher having been out of school for 20 years.
- Definitely made me see things from more than one perspective. The classes did make me more "well-rounded".

Negative comment examples

- Limited my education. I knew exactly what I wanted to learn to be successful, yet I had to take classes that distracted me from my goals.
- This limited my educational experience because I didn't learn anything. It was a review of high school.
- There are not enough online courses in general ed.
- Pembroke did not offer many of the classes I would have been interested in taking.
- Personally I don't see the point if it doesn't apply to my major.
- Some kind of pointless since you never use them in real life or for your major.
- Limited-these classes were like high school courses.
- I understand having well-rounded students, but I see Gen. Ed. classes as a means of getting more tuition dollars out of students. I feel that the mandatory 40(?) Gen. Ed. credits should be reduced to 20.
- There is too much emphasis placed on well-rounded knowledge base at the extent of more extensive knowledge in your field.

- Some of these classes seem to be a waste of time when given a person's major (I know the whole well-rounded thing, but still. For instance, what does a Computer Science major need a Religion/Philosophy class for?)
- General education courses shouldn't be required. I'm taking classes that I don't like and am not reaching my full potential because I don't enjoy the subjects. For example, science courses and mathematics courses. Sure, I'll do above 'average' in these courses, I feel bored and as if I am wasting time that could be used to study something I like.
- This was limiting and I found it to be a waste of time. I was successful (I received at least a B) in all of my Gen ed. But if it isn't in my major then I couldn't tell you what we talked about in these courses. They are a waste of time.

Academic Advising

Comments on advising were given by 360 students. In terms of connotation, 232 students provided positive comments; 88 negative comments; and 36 neutral comments. Four responses were not interpretable. Participant majors were distributed among schools/colleges in approximately the same proportion as in the student body as a whole. Students from all majors gave more positive than negative comments about academic advising. Of the negative comments, almost thirty contained no detail; that is, responses consisted of only one or two words, e.g., bad, limited, not helpful, poor, stressful, frustrating, etc. Several themes emerged among the remaining 60. These are listed below from most to least occurrence. (Only comments mentioned more than once are included in this list.)

Response

Lack of knowledge on part of advisor (re careers, programs, courses, own department, other offices, policies, procedures, etc.)

Lack of personal touch/interest (doesn't understand individual needs of students, doesn't know student, need to meet more often, doesn't keep in touch, etc.)

Lack of availability of advisor (never available, can't get in to see, difficulty getting in to see, trouble contacting, etc.)

Delayed responding (advisor doesn't respond or responds slowly to student phone or e-mail contact)

Rushed advising

Not enough help for online, distance, or transfer students

Confusion (reassignment—in School of Education—without notifying student; advisor left and student not informed or reassigned, lack of coordination between PE and Education)

Lack of match between student capabilities and courses advised to take

With between two and three positive comments for every negative one, it seems a number of students feel as though they have good advisors and have received good advice. Overwhelmingly, the number- one positive description from students about their advisors was “helpful.” Students recognize that “staying on track” and graduating in a timely fashion is something with which they need advisor assistance. Students were enthusiastic in their praise for good advisors; several said they “loved” their advisors and that their advisors were the reason they could “overcome many obstacles.” One individual said, “I thank God for my academic advisor.”

When reading through the combined positive and negative comments, a clear picture emerges of what constitutes successful advising from the student standpoint. (Much of the wording that follows is taken directly from student comments. Survey comments are supplemented with comments obtained in student focus groups; other focus group findings are supplied subsequently in this report.) The successful advisor is accessible. He or she not only stays in touch with advisees but actively reaches out to them, and has students’ best interests at heart. Good advisors are always there when students need help and may touch base with students over the summer and/or set up monthly appointments. They “go the extra mile” for their advisees. Some sample student comments about advisors who have done this are:

- My advisor types up a word document about what I need each semester and sends it to me by e-mail.
- If my advisor didn’t know the answer to a question she would refer me to somebody that knew the answer or would try to find out the answer herself.
- When ... having trouble getting my classes, my advisor was leaving her office [when I went to see her] and she reopened, turning the computer back on and going out of her way to help me.

Students profit from having advisors who are supportive, enthusiastic, friendly, patient, and encouraging; these advisors motivate students to do their best. Most importantly, successful advisors

are helpful, well-informed, resourceful, and attentive. Advisor helpfulness does not consist just of making sure that students have a PIN and know approximately what courses should be taken in subsequent terms. Students often need, and want, help deciding upon school and career goals, and staying on track to reach those goals. They appreciate help in prioritizing and making decisions among various courses and goals. As one student commented, they need help making “sound decisions.”

Students also appreciate advisors who are knowledgeable--about the advising process, courses to be offered, their own and other programs/majors, careers in their fields, university policy and procedures, etc. Even more important than the advisor knowing the answers to student questions is the willingness to help find the answers, if necessary. And students don't want the answers to be sugar-coated; they want “straight” answers and advisors who are “up front” with them. As one student said, his advisor wasn't “on his case” like a dad but rather like an uncle who told him like it was, but allowed him to make his own decisions, and he appreciated this approach.

Finally, in keeping with UNCP's motto of “where learning gets personal,” students want advising to be personal. They appreciate it when advisors are attentive to their individual academic needs and really care about their personal successes. They notice when advisors make time for them and treat them as priorities. Successful advisors notice when students are struggling and work with them to overcome barriers and to improve grades. They help students make choices that are right for the individual students, even if it means changing majors or careers. To quote one student, “Advisors are helpful; [they are] not like my dad—they won't yell at me if I mess up—but more like an uncle—[they give] good advice....”

The importance of a good advisor in retention can be summed up by the following student comment: *I love my advisor!!! She is the reason I still attend UNCP.*

Focus groups

More than one dozen focus groups were conducted for this study; 39 undergraduate students attended one of the sessions. Because of the promise of anonymity, demographic information was not collected from students. There was a mix of men and women and all undergraduate classes were represented; however, the overwhelming majority of participants were juniors or seniors. As described in the graduate student focus group section of this report, students were presented with questions in a semi-structured format. Students were informed of the semi-structured format and told that after a few “starter” questions, they could discuss whatever topics they desired. The starter questions inquired about reasons for choosing UNCP, reasons for staying at UNCP, what students liked and disliked about

the university, and experiences with campus offices, departments, and courses. Focus group notes were taken by both Dr. King and a research assistant.

Student comments related to why they chose to attend UNCP and why they stay here again echoed responses to the online survey. Affordability is one major reason that undergraduate students choose to attend UNCP. This is true for both in-state and out-of-state students. Students from Pennsylvania and New York indicated that it was less expensive for them to pay out-of-state tuition at UNCP than to pay in-state tuition at home. Mentioned equally as often as affordability as a reason why students attend UNCP was location. The university is near Ft. Bragg and within easy commuting distance for many students. Several students indicated that they liked the fact that UNCP was “close but not too close to home.” Another recurring theme came from students who liked the rural location. Their reasoning was that they could more easily focus on their schoolwork without the distractions a more urban environment would provide. Following affordability and location as a draw for students were UNCP’s small, intimate campus and reputation for small classes (with the one-on-one interaction with faculty this could afford). Mentioned by several students as reasons for attending UNCP were the variety of good programs/majors and financial aid opportunities (e.g., having a better chance for scholarships than at a larger university).

When asked why they stayed at UNCP, the most frequent responses related to the small campus and small classes. Some variation of this was mentioned by almost every focus group attendee. According to students, there is a sense of community at UNCP and you can get to know people more easily than on a larger campus. Everyone is friendly, “even guys who do the lawn.” Several students specifically mentioned that UNCP’s motto of “where learning gets personal” resonated with, and proved true, for them. They liked the attention and the possibility of building rapport with faculty that came with small classes. They also recognized that when faculty know students individually not only is learning enhanced but also student accountability is increased. Students work harder when they are known as individuals and have built a rapport with instructors; moreover, they are more likely to be missed in class. One student talked about how she liked the accountability and commented that “when walking across campus, I will run into at least five members of the faculty who talk to her and ask her about things; they know her and will expect things of her.” Another student noted that the personal learning approach is “one of the greatest things keeping him here.” Faculty commitment to student success was another major theme that emerged in response to the question of why students stay at UNCP. Students perceive faculty as approachable, friendly, and willing to go out of their way to help students. As one student said, faculty at UNCP “go above and beyond to try to help students be

successful.” Another student recalled a time when he was a newer student and was having doubts about staying. One of his professors took him aside and told him he was too smart to be doing poorly on tests and gave him some pointers on how to do well. He is now making dean’s list and attributes it to that one teacher who took an interest in him. The personal nature of teaching/learning at UNCP was captured by a student’s remark that “at the end of the day, you are still a person, and professors understand that and try to assist you getting to your goals.” Students also can tell that faculty enjoy teaching and are passionate about their subject matter. They feel they are getting a high-quality education, especially considering the affordability of tuition. Several stated that they felt they were getting a lot more than they were paying for considering the small classes, the connections they were making, and the cultural opportunities. One student asked her peers in the focus group, “Does anybody else feel like they are getting a deal? Going to UNCP is like going to a private school and paying a public price.” Another student in the same group responded that the best thing for her was that, at graduation, she would “get to walk across the stage and not drag behind her several thousand dollars’ worth of loans.” In a different group, a senior commented that the “quality of education [at UNCP] is on a par with anywhere in the state; it has everything except the big classes.” Finally, students stay at UNCP because of positive by-products of our campus’ diversity. That is, the exposure to diverse groups of people (e.g., with different cultural or religious backgrounds, or with differing handicapped statuses, etc.) makes one more well-rounded and more accepting of others. This contributes significantly to the overall friendly campus atmosphere and to student growth. One student, in explaining why she liked the diversity at UNCP, said “It pushes you outside your comfort zone” and another, who was afraid she would be the oldest person in her class discovered that “students here invite you in no matter what your age, race, or ethnic group.” In a slightly different vein, students discussed what about UNCP had helped them be successful as students. The most frequent responses involved people—faculty who are good advisors and staff who are nice, helpful, and supportive. Also mentioned were tutors (personalized assistance), career services (helping students prepare for the “real world”), and the writing center. One student stated that he was not a good writer and the writing center had been a “miracle” to him. Another student, when discussing resources stated that both tutors and instructors are helpful and willing to work individually with students; however, “students have to recognize that they need the help and many don’t.”

Students were encouraged to discuss any problems they have had while at UNCP and anything they would change if they could. Topics clustered in about 10 major areas. These are discussed below from most to least frequently mentioned.

- **COURSES:**

- Standards: A few students complained of courses that were too difficult (nursing) or had too heavy a workload (some business courses); however, much more often students thought that course standards were too low and that courses were being taught at more of a high school than a college level, especially general education courses. One student stated that he had a problem with how easy courses were; he had expected more of “an analytical, critical thinking focus” in college. Another student commented that even the honors courses were easy; perhaps easier than “regular courses.” Some students indicated that their high school courses were more challenging than courses they were taking at UNCP; these were, most often, students who had studied internationally (e.g., Philippines, China). In some cases, students specifically mentioned low quality in *online courses* using phrases such as “waste of time,” “busy work,” “lack of faculty involvement,” “didn’t learn,” “got nothing out of it,” and “minimum of work involved.” One student described his experience in an online course as checking in once a week, doing what needed to be done in two hours, and then forgetting about it until the next week. In other cases, students commented on how much easier *summer courses* were than those taken during the regular school year. They stated that “some profs meet one-half hour for a three-hour course.”
- Variety: Students would like to see a greater number of alternative-type courses including more online courses (especially for general education courses), more summer courses (whether online or face-to-face), more late afternoon and night undergraduate courses, and perhaps even the addition of a “winter-mester.”

- **OFFICES:** In every focus group, students included stories of experiences with campus offices, especially offices located in Lumbee Hall. One student specifically stated that her experiences in Lumbee Hall made her want to leave the university and another (senior) student indicated that she knew “a lot of people who left UNCP because of people in Lumbee Hall.” Offices mentioned by name were financial aid, student accounts, the cashier’s office, and admissions. Their complaints were that staff are: (1) Disorganized (lost paperwork, submission of multiple copies of the same form); (2) Unprofessional (poor grammar, annoyed easily, lack of follow-up); (3) Unpleasant (rude, cold, mean); and (4) Unknowledgeable (lacking answers, no help with

finding scholarship opportunities). Some of the problems experienced by students were attributed to lack of communication, both between offices in Lumbee Hall (e.g., “communication between student accounts and financial aid was not there”) and between office personnel and students. As one student said, “A lot of offices say ‘I don’t know’ when asked a question and then the student has to circle around to different offices....” Another explained, “Everyone [in all offices in Lumbee Hall] needs to be informed about the same thing; I feel like I end up talking to everybody except the one person who could answer my question. If everyone was informed of the same procedures, it would go more smoothly.” Students in many cases recognized that part of the communication difficulty was students’ low level of understanding of processes involved in financial aid or student accounts. They would like help in understanding “everything that needs to happen” and have processes explained to them in greater detail. They also indicate an awareness that office staff have to deal with many students (and parents) and that it must get frustrating. However, it’s “all new to students” and staff have to realize that “they are here to help,” and “keep a happy attitude regardless.” A few students made comments indicating that they had learned to immediately ask for the supervisor or director of an office as a way to avoid problems.

- **EXPENSES:** The primary expense about which students complained was the cost of textbooks. With the high price of textbooks and no rental option, many students have bought their textbooks online. Some students receiving financial aid felt they were “locked into” having to purchase their textbooks from the bookstore and wanted the option of purchasing books online to reduce costs. Student dissatisfaction with the low buyback for textbooks was expressed as well. Although students fee the affordability of tuition at UNCP as a major reason for choosing to attend, they are not happy with the rise in fees or about how fees are allocated. Commuting students wonder whether they make use of campus facilities enough to warrant paying the same amount in fees as on-campus students. One person stated that, although students come to UNCP because of the low tuition, they may leave when faced with the high cost associated with fees or room and board.
- **OTHER STUDENTS:** Focus group attendees expressed concern about three groups of their peers: students who are behavioral problems in their classes, students who are unprepared for college, and students who complain about UNCP. Students in the first group were described as rude, unruly, disruptive (with cell phones and computers), and too talkative in class. The theories presented for why students behave this way focused on first-year students in general

education courses who either didn't take their courses or their education seriously, or who still have a "high school mentality" and believe that they can "get by with" in college what they did in high school. Focus group participants indicated that they had been in classes that seemed out of control and in which instructors were not good disciplinarians. Their solution? Faculty should have a "no tolerance" policy and throw students out of class when they are creating an environment that is not conducive to learning for their classmates. One student commented that he wanted to invent a device that would turn off all WiFi signals when an instructor begins class. In terms of unprepared students, these also were thought to be first-year students, out of their parents' house for the first time, and not ready for the freedom that college affords. They are unprepared for college not only academically but also in terms of organizational skills and maturity. It may take time to adjust to being responsible for getting oneself up in time for class or to the difference between high school and college policies (e.g., absentee policy). One student, as he talked about getting his first taste of freedom in college, said "I signed up for an eight o'clock class; I figured I did it in high school. But I couldn't get up [for it]. I realized how important Mom and Dad were to getting up in high school." Some freshmen look for something (social) to do every night and then can't get up for classes. They have difficulty balancing school and a social life. The last group of students about whom focus group attendees had concerns (i.e., the complainers) include students who say they want to be elsewhere, who don't take any initiative in doing things for themselves and expect everything to be provided for them, and who feel they are "above" UNCP.

- **SURROUNDING AREA:** Although some students saw the rural location of UNCP as a plus (allowing them to concentrate on their studies), several acknowledged that there was not a lot to do in the area surrounding the school. In their opinion, students have left to go to "larger areas" where various amenities are more conveniently located. One senior told of a friend leaving UNCP because she "had to go to Lumberton to do anything." On students' wish list for the area were bookstores, more housing options, a greater choice in restaurants, a 24-hour Wal-mart, a shuttle to Fayetteville, and a new movie theater (contrasted with the older movie theaters in Lumberton). They also perceived a need for less "bottlenecked traffic" through town, greater friendliness among townspeople, and more local jobs (with employers who understand and work around student schedules).
- **FACULTY:** Overall, students are quite pleased with UNCP's faculty. However, there is room for improvement among a few groups. One of the groups mentioned consisted of faculty who fail

at making classes interesting. It makes for long classes when instructors lecture in a monotone or read right off the PowerPoint without making eye contact with students. A student comment was: “some...professors...use 100 [percent] PowerPoints and call it teaching.” Faculty should act as though they are excited to be here and have some energy. Faculty attitude impacts student attitudes; if faculty are “pumped up,” it makes students think their subjects are interesting. It is insulting to students when faculty repeat what is in the textbook; they can read the textbook themselves. Students would like to see more discussion along with lectures and more hands-on activities. One student referenced UNCP’s motto when discussing pedagogy: “If the motto is ‘where learning gets personal,’ [faculty] need to make it personal—not just use PowerPoints or the book. Faculty should rely on what they know and want us to know.” Two other groups of faculty who received dings from students were those who are too lenient and those who are conceited. “Too lenient” faculty are those who do not stick to the syllabus, do not hold students accountable, and give students too many “breaks.” These faculty members are frustrating to students who expect more structure and enforced class policy. “Conceited” faculty are those who (“perhaps because they have a PhD”) treat students as though they were stupid. One student reported that, when she asked a question in class, a faculty member responded: “What don’t you understand? A kindergartner could understand [that].” Another stated that “there are lots of professors who think they are dealing with children; they forget they are dealing with adults. I had one professor who told me to sit down and shut up.” Two requests students had of all faculty were: (1) give earlier feedback (or earlier tests/grades) in classes so that students know how they are doing, especially in general education courses; and (2) be sensitive to the fact that students have life responsibilities such as jobs and families.

- **CAMPUS:** Not surprisingly, several focus group attendees expressed frustration with parking on campus. They felt that the major parking lots fill up too quickly and that there are not enough commuter lots. One student, perhaps tongue in cheek, commented that parking tags should be color coded such that students would be allowed to park only near the building that housed their major courses. The “wish list” for other changes on campus was quite short and focused mainly on changes to hours of operation, e.g., longer hours for the pool and gym and better hours for the cafeteria (e.g., open later in the evenings and earlier on weekends for breakfast). One student noted that there was “a lot to do here...something for everyone if they choose to do it.” Others echoed this sentiment and stated that the problem was getting students to take advantage of the multiple opportunities.

- SECURITY:** Security, both off and on campus, was a major theme to emerge from focus group discussions. Students don't feel safe renting in the area around the school; several cases of houses and apartments being broken into were cited. Not only the break-ins but the seeming unconcern of landlords was an issue. In more than one instance, these break-ins occurred at Courtyard apartments. According to students, when they reported the break-ins, the only response was being told to buy renter's insurance. When a local sheriff was called, the response time was slow. Students say they learn early on to stay off the side streets in Pembroke, that anything off the main road is considered a "bad" neighborhood. Perhaps because UNCP is located in a poor area, hypothesize students, they have been approached by "crackheads" asking for money at Wal-mart or on the railroad tracks around campus. In terms of on-campus security, several students expressed frustration with campus police and felt they needed to do a better job. They bolstered this argument by citing slow response time, not taking reported crimes seriously, and spending more time ticketing than ensuring safety. One student had been conducting research for a class on the effectiveness of campus police. She believed there should not be animosity between campus police and students but stated that, in her interviews with students, "no one had anything positive to say about the campus police." Physical changes on campus (for increased safety) that students would like to see included increasing the number of emergency poles and the number of lights. One student indicated that the area between Sampson and Village apartments felt like a "please mug me zone" because there were no lights. Women particularly felt unsafe on campus due to both lighting issues and male students who stand in front of the UC making unsolicited remarks to them.
- ADVISING:** At least a dozen comments were made by students regarding advising issues. A few students had had negative experiences with advisors—advisors who "brushed them off," were disorganized and therefore wasted students' time, or just didn't seem to go the "extra mile." Some students indicated that it was tough to get in to see their advisor face-to-face, especially if the advisor had additional duties (e.g., department chairs) and others resented having to come in to get their PIN when they didn't feel as though they needed the "hand-holding" other students might require. These students did acknowledge the difficulty, from the advisor's point of view, of distinguishing between those who need an advisor's help from those who do not. The most frequently mentioned issues related to academic advising at UNCP involved advisors who did not have the information students needed or who provided incorrect or conflicting information. For example, students reported receiving advising in the Honor's College that

conflicted with information provided by the Biology department. There particularly seems to be a problem with non-degree specific advising; that is, students continuing with a FRS advisor even after indicating a major preference or transfer students being advised (at orientation) by someone outside their chosen discipline. When students can't (or don't) get the information they need from advisors, they talk to peers and may get bad advice.

- **POLICY/PROCEDURES:** There were not large numbers of problems with or suggested changes to university policy and procedures noted by students. A few areas of dissatisfaction involved:
 - Online students who have to come to campus to drop a course;
 - Online students who have to come to campus to get a PIN for registration;
 - Putting the last day for drop/add around a holiday.
 - Having student workers in the Writing Center who had to pass ENG 1050/1060 with a “C” or better (the comment was that these students should have gotten an “A” in ENG courses to be working in the Writing Center);
 - Having inconsistent attendance policies across courses;
 - Orientations for new students that mixed on-campus and commuter students;
 - A lack of diversity among faculty equivalent to the diversity among students;
 - Inattention by department chairs about what is going on in classes and disregard for student evaluations. About this last point, a student said this: “I know that there are teachers who get bad reviews from their students semester after semester and are still here. If that one person is having such a negative effect on students, students will change their majors or leave school. Students want to feel as though their opinion matters when doing evaluations.”
- **REPUTATION OF SCHOOL:** A few students indicated that UNCP’s reputation was a troubling issue. UNCP has had the reputation of allowing any student who applies to get in. If this is true, it devalues the educational experience here and makes other universities more attractive (as they seem more prestigious). If it is not true, efforts need to be made to change the perception. Anecdotes were shared of other students transferring because they want to go to a school with a [more positive] “reputation (even if that may not be the best thing for them) and where there is more stuff to do.”

At each focus group session, students discussed what they would tell new students about how to be successful as at UNCP. Their (paraphrased) advice is as follows:

- Get involved! Social involvement contributes to your college experience; the more involved you are, the more you'll get out of college and the more likely you'll be to stay (because it gives you an investment in, and a greater sense of pride about, your school). There are numerous ways to get involved on campus; take advantage of them! Seek out opportunities; don't just wait for them to come to you. Encourage your faculty to let students know what is offered for them at the university. The contacts you make through your social involvement (that is, the connections with and mentoring by peers) will be invaluable at helping you be successful. In fact, you might ask your FRS instructor to invite some continuing freshmen or sophomores to class to talk about their experiences. Become involved academically as well—go to class, communicate with your professors. Make sure you balance academic and social involvement—learn to party responsibly and manage your time well. Don't procrastinate; get a planner; and take advantage of offices on campus that can help you develop time management skills.
- Be serious about school! Some students find that they are not ready for a 4-year program right out of high school and go to a community college first; this allowed them to come to UNCP with the motivation and maturity needed to be successful. Another option is to take a course or two in the summer after you graduate from high school to prepare you before taking a full load in the fall of your first year in college. By the same token, don't be over confident—"even intelligent people need to study." One other piece of advice: Take some courses in your chosen major early on in your academic career (along with general education courses). This will be potentially beneficial to you in several ways. It will give you more time to "fix" things if you decide that major isn't for you or if you need to repeat a major course. It also will help you stay focused and optimistic because you can see what a degree in that field will do for you. Perhaps most importantly, it will help you be more committed to the university and to your education.

Appendix

Current Undergraduate Student Online Survey

1. What is your current classification?
 - a. First-year degree-seeking student
 - b. Sophomore degree-seeking student
 - c. Junior degree-seeking student
 - d. Senior degree-seeking student
 - e. Non-degree-seeking student

2. What reason(s) led to you choosing to attend UNCP? (Check all that apply.)
 - a. Location
 - b. Affordability (of tuition, fees, textbooks, etc.)
 - c. Financial aid opportunities, e.g. grant, scholarships, and work study
 - d. Availability of majors, programs, or courses in which you were interested
 - e. Quality of instruction or reputation of faculty
 - f. Quality of facilities or campus appearance
 - g. Welcoming campus atmosphere
 - h. Other family members attend(ed) UNCP
 - i. Friends attend(ed) UNCP
 - j. Campus safety
 - k. Campus diversity
 - l. Admission requirements
 - m. Other:

3. What reason(s) have led to you remaining at UNCP? (Check all that apply.)
 - a. Meeting educational goals
 - b. Meeting personal goals
 - c. Meeting expectations of family or friends
 - d. Quality of instruction
 - e. Quality of facilities
 - f. Other students (peers)
 - g. Enthusiasm and helpfulness of the teaching faculty
 - h. Helpful academic advising
 - i. Welcoming and helpful atmosphere in campus offices
 - j. Investment of time and money
 - k. Location
 - l. Affordability
 - m. Financial aid opportunities
 - n. Campus safety
 - o. Campus diversity
 - p. Extracurricular activities (clubs, organizations, Greek life, athletics, student government, etc.)
 - q. Enrichment activities (e.g., study abroad, service learning, or internship opportunities)
 - r. Other:

4. If you know of anyone who withdrew from UNCP recently, for what reasons do you think they left? (Check all that apply.)
 - a. Job or difficulty balancing work and school
 - b. Family issues or responsibilities
 - c. Financial
 - d. Personal
 - e. Transfer
 - f. Medical
 - g. Difficulties adjusting to the college environment (e.g., homesickness, difficulty balancing social & academic life)
 - h. Academic difficulties
 - i. Rural location of school
 - j. Inability to get classes wanted/needed
 - k. Lack of social or work opportunities in the surrounding community
 - l. Lack of skills associated with academic success (e.g., good time management, good study habits, organizational skills)
 - m. Other:

5. Have you ever taken a semester or more off from school during your time at UNCP, and if so what was the primary reason?
 - a. Never stopped out
 - b. Job
 - c. Family
 - d. Financial
 - e. Personal
 - f. Transferred
 - g. Medical
 - h. Difficulties adjusting to the college environment (e.g., homesickness, difficulty balancing social & academic life)
 - i. Academic difficulties
 - j. Other:

6. If you, at any time while at student at UNCP, considered withdrawing from school, what was the primary reason?
 - a. Never considered leaving
 - b. Job
 - c. Family
 - d. Financial
 - e. Personal
 - f. Transfer
 - g. Medical
 - h. Difficulties adjusting to the college environment (e.g., homesickness, difficulty balancing social & academic life)
 - i. Academic difficulties
 - j. Under-preparedness for the intensity of college course work
 - k. Other:

7. Do you plan to complete your degree at UNCP?

- a. Definitely no
 - b. Probably no
 - c. Probably yes
 - d. Definitely yes
8. If not, what is the main reason?
9. If yes, what is the main reason?

10. Are you employed?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
11. If yes, how do you successfully balance working with school responsibilities?

12. Do you live with your family, children, and/or significant other?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
13. If yes, how do you successfully balance home life with school responsibilities?

14. Are you the first person in your family to attend college?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure or prefer not to respond

15. How would you rate the faculty's attitudes toward student success (as advisors, in the classroom, etc.)?
 - a. Excellent
 - b. More than adequate
 - c. Adequate
 - d. Disappointing
 - e. Very disappointing
 - f. Not sure or prefer not to rate
16. Comments on faculty and student success:

17. What is the single most important factor at UNCP that has enriched your educational experience and made you a successful student?

18. If you could change one thing about UNCP that would enrich your educational experience here and make you a more successful student, what would it be?

19. There are a number of offices and programs at UNCP which offer academic, social, experiential, or other kinds of support for students. For each of those listed below which you have utilized, please provide comments on how it either limited or enhanced your educational experience:
[open text box for each]
 - a. General education (courses outside your major intended to provide you with a broad and well-rounded knowledge base)
 - b. Financial Aid
 - c. Tutoring

- d. Career Services
- e. Counseling and Testing
- f. Library
- g. Bookstore
- h. Student Health Services
- i. Residence Life
- j. Campus Security Services
- k. The Athletic Program
- l. Admissions procedures
- m. Registration procedures
- n. Academic Advising
- o. Recreation and intramural programs
- p. Social, culture and artistic programs
- q. Student organizations and clubs
- r. Other:

20. Do you feel having a college degree is essential to success in this economic climate?

21. Do you have any additional comments on any topic that would help UNCP provide its students with the greatest opportunity to be successful?

22. What is your major? [Text box]

23. What is your age? [Text box]

24. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female

25. What is your race/ethnicity?

- a. Hispanic
- b. Asian
- c. African American
- d. American Indian
- e. Euro-American (i.e., white, Caucasian)
- f. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- g. Multi-racial

Thank you for your participation! UNCP values your input as we seek to continue to be a great place to live and learn! We would love to have you attend a focus group at which the topic of student success at UNCP will be discussed in greater detail. Please click the link below if you are willing to participate in a focus group. The page to which you are directed will allow you to register for a focus group that is convenient for you and to provide an e-mail address to which reminders can be sent. (Clicking the link will take you out of the survey ensuring that, whether or not you participate in a focus group, your survey responses will remain anonymous.)

Graduate Student Online Survey

26. What is your graduate program?
- a. Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.)
 - b. Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.)
 - c. Master of School Administration (M.S.A.)
 - d. Master of Science in Service Agency Counseling (M.S.)
 - e. Master of Social Work (M.S.W.)
 - f. Master of Arts in Education—Elementary Education (M.A.Ed.)
 - g. Master of Arts in Education—Middle Grades Education (M.A.Ed.)
 - h. Master of Arts in Education—Reading Education (M.A.Ed.)
 - i. Master of Arts in Education—Professional School Counseling (M.A.Ed.)
 - j. Master of Arts in Art Education
 - k. Master of Arts in English Education
 - l. Master of Arts in Mathematics Education
 - m. Master of Arts in Music Education
 - n. Master of Arts in Physical Education
 - o. Master of Arts in Science Education
 - p. Master of Arts in Social Studies Education
 - q. Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) [Note: The M.A.T. Program offers specializations in Art Education, English Education, Mathematics Education, Middle Grades Education, Music Education, Physical Education, Science Education, and Social Studies Education]
27. What is your area of concentration/specialization, if applicable? [Text box]
28. What is your admission status?
- a. Full Admission
 - b. Provisional Admission
29. For what reason(s) did you choose to attend UNCP? (Check all that apply.)
- a. Reputation of the program
 - b. Location
 - c. Affordability (of tuition, fees, textbooks, etc.)
 - d. Financial aid opportunities (e.g. grants, graduate assistantships, tuition scholarships)
 - e. Availability of majors, programs, or courses in which you were interested
 - f. Quality of instruction or reputation of faculty
 - g. Quality of facilities or campus appearance
 - h. Welcoming campus atmosphere
 - i. Other family members attend(ed) UNCP
 - j. Friends attend(ed) UNCP
 - k. Campus safety
 - l. Campus diversity
 - m. Admission requirements
 - n. Other: [Text box]
30. For what reason(s) have you remained in graduate school at UNCP? (Check all that apply.)
- a. Meeting educational goals
 - b. Meeting personal goals

- c. Meeting expectations of family or friends
 - d. Quality of instruction
 - e. Quality of facilities
 - f. Relationship with advisor and/or program director
 - g. Other students (peers)
 - h. Enthusiasm and helpfulness of the teaching faculty
 - i. Helpful academic advising
 - j. Accessibility of courses
 - k. Welcoming and helpful atmosphere in campus offices
 - l. Investment of time and money
 - m. Location
 - n. Affordability
 - o. Financial aid opportunities
 - p. Campus safety
 - q. Campus diversity
 - r. Enrichment activities (e.g., internship opportunities, performances/speakers presented by Givens Performing Arts Center)
 - s. Other: [Text box]
31. Have you ever taken a semester or more off from graduate school during your time at UNCP, and if so what was the primary reason?
- a. Never took off for a semester or more
 - b. Financial
 - c. Job
 - d. Family
 - e. Personal
 - f. Medical
 - g. Difficulty in getting some of the courses required for my program of study
 - h. Academic difficulties
 - i. Under-preparedness for the rigor and intensity of graduate course work
 - j. Other: [Text box]
32. If you, at any time while a student at UNCP, considered withdrawing completely from graduate school, what was the primary reason?
- a. Never considered leaving
 - b. Financial
 - c. Job
 - d. Family
 - e. Personal
 - f. Medical
 - g. Difficulty in getting some of the courses required for my program of study
 - h. Academic difficulties
 - i. Under-preparedness for the rigor and intensity of graduate course work
 - j. Other: [Text box]
33. Have you taken any graduate courses in an online format? (if no, skip to 10)
- a. Yes
 - b. No

34. If yes, what approximate percentage of the courses in your total program have been online courses?
- 10% or less
 - 33%
 - 50%
 - 66%
 - 75%
 - 100%
35. Have you taken any graduate courses at an off-campus site? (if no, skip to 12)
- Yes
 - No
36. If yes, what approximate percentage of the courses in your total program have you taken at an off-campus site?
- 10% or less
 - 33%
 - 50%
 - 66%
 - 75%
 - 100%
37. Do you plan to complete your graduate degree at UNCP?
- Definitely no
 - Probably no
 - Probably yes
 - Definitely yes
38. If not, what is the main reason? [Text box]
39. If yes, what is the main reason? [Text box]
40. When do you expect to finish your degree requirements? [Text box]
41. Are you employed?
- Yes
 - No
42. If yes, how many hours do you work per week (approximate)?
- 0-10
 - 10-20
 - 20-30
 - 30-40
 - 40+
43. How would you rate the faculty with regard to their contribution to your success in your graduate program (as advisors, in the classroom, etc.)?

- a. Excellent
 - b. More than adequate
 - c. Adequate
 - d. Disappointing
 - e. Very disappointing
 - f. Not sure or prefer not to rate
44. Please provide any comments you may wish to make regarding faculty contribution to your success: [Text box]
45. What is the single most important factor at UNCP that has enriched your educational experience? [Text box]
46. If you could change one thing about UNCP that would enrich your educational experience here, what would it be? [Text box]
47. There are a number of offices and programs at UNCP which offer academic, social, experiential, or other kinds of support for students. For each of those listed below which you have utilized, please provide comments on how it either limited or enhanced your educational experience: [open text box for each]
- a. School of Graduate Studies
 - b. School of Business
 - c. School of Education
 - d. College of Arts and Sciences
 - e. Financial Aid
 - f. Career Services
 - g. Counseling and Testing
 - h. Library
 - i. Bookstore
 - j. Student Health Services
 - k. Residence Life
 - l. Campus Security Services
 - m. Athletic Program
 - n. Academic Advising
 - o. Disability Support Services
 - p. Social, cultural and artistic programs
 - q. Other:
48. Please provide any additional comments you may have on any topic that would help UNCP provide its graduate students with the greatest opportunity to be successful? [Text box]
49. What is your age?
- a. 20-25
 - b. 26-30
 - c. 31-35
 - d. 36-40

- e. 41-45
- f. 46-50
- g. 51-55
- h. Over 55

50. What is your gender?

- a. Male
- b. Female

51. What is your race/ethnicity?

- a. Hispanic
- b. Asian
- c. African American
- d. American Indian
- e. Euro-American (i.e., white, Caucasian)
- f. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- g. Multi-racial

Thank you for your participation! UNCP values your input as we seek to continue to be a great place to live and learn!

We would love to have you attend a focus group at which the topic of graduate student success at UNCP will be discussed in greater detail. Please click the link below if you are willing to participate in a focus group with other graduate students. The page to which you are directed will allow you to register for a focus group that is convenient for you and to provide an e-mail address to which reminders can be sent. (Clicking the link will take you out of the survey ensuring that, whether or not you participate in a focus group, your survey responses will remain anonymous.)