

**Executive Summary of the UTA Exit Survey for Graduating Seniors:  
Fall 2016 & Spring 2017**

For the purpose of better understanding The University of Texas at Arlington student experience, we contacted the 7,108 graduating seniors from the fall 2016 and spring 2017 graduating classes with an Exit Survey. These students completed their degree requirements from traditional on-campus, online, and accelerated online programs during those two semesters. The university-wide response rate was sixty percent (4,243 of 7,108 students). This summary presents highlights from the student responses.

**Among the TOP 3 FACTORS\* students listed as influencing their decision to attend UTA were cost of attendance (51%), the availability of a major program in my area of interest (41%), and convenience of location relative to home or work (39%).** The frequency that students listed the availability of online degree program in my area of interest (30%) as an influencing factor in choosing to attend UTA supports the university’s growing online degree program offerings.

**If they had to do it over again,** most (83%) indicated that they *would choose to attend UTA for their degree* and almost all (92%) *would recommend UTA to friends, family or associates.*

**Across colleges, student satisfaction with UTA was high** among the survey respondents.

The first figure shows the rated areas from the survey and the percent of students who rated them as excellent or good (Figure 1).

	Total % Excellent or Good
Overall Quality of Faculty	96.65
Clarity of Degree Requirements	95.76
Overall Quality of Advising	92.71
Academic Experience	87.63
UTA as a Whole	86.01

**In terms of satisfaction with their major, the top five aspects**

students ranked as excellent were: (1) *the major/department as a whole*, (2) *clarity of degree requirements*, (3) *overall quality of*

*advising*, (4) *overall quality of faculty*, and (5) *quality of upper division courses*. In fact, most either strongly agreed or agreed with the statements “course content reflected current trends in my field” (92%) and “my major gave me a sense of competence in my field” (93%).

Figure 1. Student satisfaction percentages

**Clearly, students indicated a high degree of satisfaction,** evidenced by the percentages for *Overall Quality of Faculty* (97%), *Academic Experience* (88%), and *UTA as a whole* (86%). Through the lens of these graduating respondents, UTA appears to deliver the quality academic programs that the students were seeking.

**Principal activities upon graduation** included plans for pursuing employment (70%) or continuing their education (23%). For those whose plans were to pursue employment, about half (51%) had already secured full-time employment, were continuing with their current employer, or secured an internship. The others were currently seeking employment (42%), seeking an internship (2%), or starting a business, self-employed (1%). Among those who indicated that they planned to continue with their current employer, more than two thirds (71%) reported that their UTA degree will improve the opportunity for advancement in their current position.

\*Top 3 Factors are reported as % of respondents not percentage of responses because students could select more than one factor.

**Academic Preparation.** The percent of students who perceived their individual preparedness as very well or adequately prepared (across all sixteen areas and categories), positively ranged from 81% to 96%. Figure 2 depicts the top five areas. Importantly, the student's perceptions of individual preparedness directly align with five of the Texas Core Curriculum objectives: Personal Responsibility, Social Responsibility, Empirical & Quantitative Skills, Critical Thinking, and Teamwork. These also reflect the priority skills that hiring managers look for in job candidates (Hart Research, 2015).

**Of the UTA graduating seniors that responded,** over a fourth identified as Hispanic Latino (26%). In terms of race/ethnicity\*\*, gender, and age, student respondents identified predominantly as White/Caucasian (58%), female (71%), and averaged 31 years of age (see Figure 3).

**Other important descriptors of the graduating senior respondents,** included the fact that *two thirds transferred from other institutions* (67%), *a majority finished their degree in 4 years or less* (60%) and over a third stated that *the courses for their degree were completely online* (38%). Table 1 provides additional information describing these students.

Overall, the Exit Survey for fall 2016 & spring 2017 graduating seniors depicts high satisfaction with the university experience at UTA. In it, they portray their positive perception of its value in preparing them for the future.

Perception percentages: very well or adequately prepared

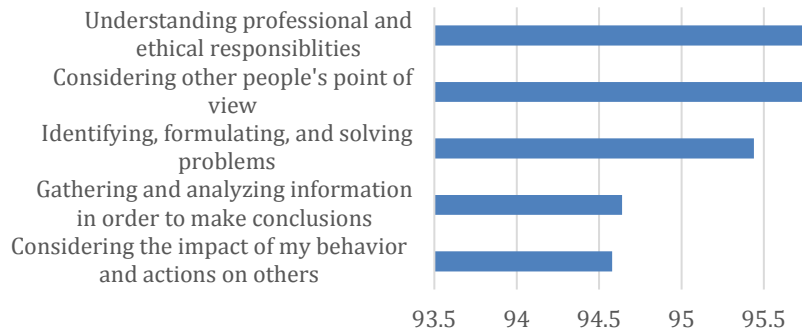


Figure 2. Student's perceptions of their individual preparedness

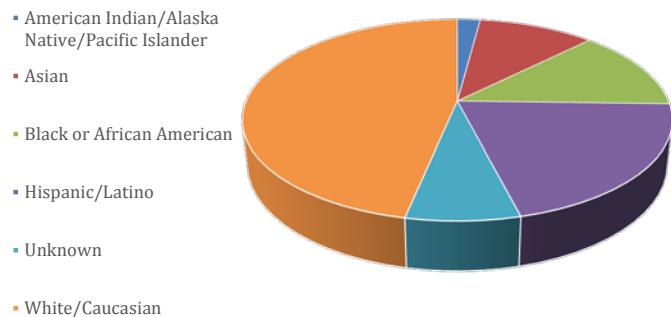


Figure 3. Student race and ethnicity

Table 1. Descriptors of respondents

59.67%	Finished their degree in 4 years or less
46.08%	Lived outside Arlington, TX, 25 or more miles from campus
56.71%	Employed 31 or more hours per week
32.95%	Used own employment as primary source of financial support while completing degree,
37.62%	Took classes at UTA and another institution during the same semester (either online or on campus)
36.64%	Completed degree plan entirely online
50.79%	Graduated, despite neither parent having graduated from college

\*\*Race and ethnicity is reported consistent with The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board guidelines. Hart Research Associates. (2015). *Falling Short? College Learning and Career Success*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities.