

**Executive Summary Undergraduate Exit Survey
University-Wide Results
Fall 2023-Spring 2024**

To gain a better understanding of the student experience at The University of Texas at Arlington, 6,197 graduating seniors were asked to complete a comprehensive exit survey during fall 2023 and spring 2024. Those students have completed their degree requirements from traditional on-campus, online, and accelerated online programs during these semesters. The university-wide response rate was 39% (1,073 out of 2,731 students) for fall 2023 and 33% (1,156 out of 3,466) for spring 2024. The response rate for the spring semester was lower in comparison to previous semesters, as was the number of survey completions (85% for fall 2023 and 84% for spring 2024) in comparison to last year (90% for fall 2022 and 91% for spring 2023). Table 1 shows the overall response rates for each College, Division and School on campus for fall 2023 and spring 2024.

Table 1: Survey response rates per college/school¹

College/School	# Graduates	# Respondents	Response Rate
College of Architecture, Planning and Public Affairs	113	23	20%
College of Business	1045	365	35%
College of Education	118	59	50%
College of Engineering	790	327	41%
College of Nursing and Health Innovation	2506	878	35%
College of Liberal Arts	823	299	36%
College of Science	637	215	34%
School of Social Work	161	84	52%
Division of Student Success	229	70	31%

The top three reasons students chose to attend UTA were *availability of major program in their area of interest* (17%), *cost of attendance* (16%), and *convenience of location relative to home or work* (13%). Additionally, 10% of students attended due to *availability of online degree program in their area of interest and financial aid or scholarship offer*.²

Table 2: Student Satisfaction Ratings	Total (%) "Excellent" and "Good"
Academic experience	86%
UTA as a whole	83%
Online registration	82%
Paying tuition/fees online	80%
Library facilities, resources, and services	71%
Bookstore services	67%
UTA administration	66%
Safety measures on campus	57%
Overall support during Covid-19	54%
Recreational facilities	53%
Quality of facilities and equipment	53%

¹ Some colleges are overrepresented in comparison to others regarding response rates. For a more thorough explanation, see the Response Bias Analysis at the end of this summary.

² The results for this and all other items discussed in this summary are presented as overall results and did not take into consideration demographic differences in responses.

Students indicated a high degree of satisfaction particularly with *Academic Experience* (86%), *UTA as a whole* (83%), *Online Registration* (82%), and *Payment of Tuition/Fees Online* (80%) (Table 2). Also, around

71% of the students were satisfied with the library facilities, resources, and services. Through the lens of these graduates, UTA appears to deliver the quality academic programs and services that students were seeking.

If they had to decide to attend a university again, most graduates (82%) indicated that they *would choose to attend UTA for their degree*, and a large majority (90%) *would recommend UTA to friends, family, or associates* as well.

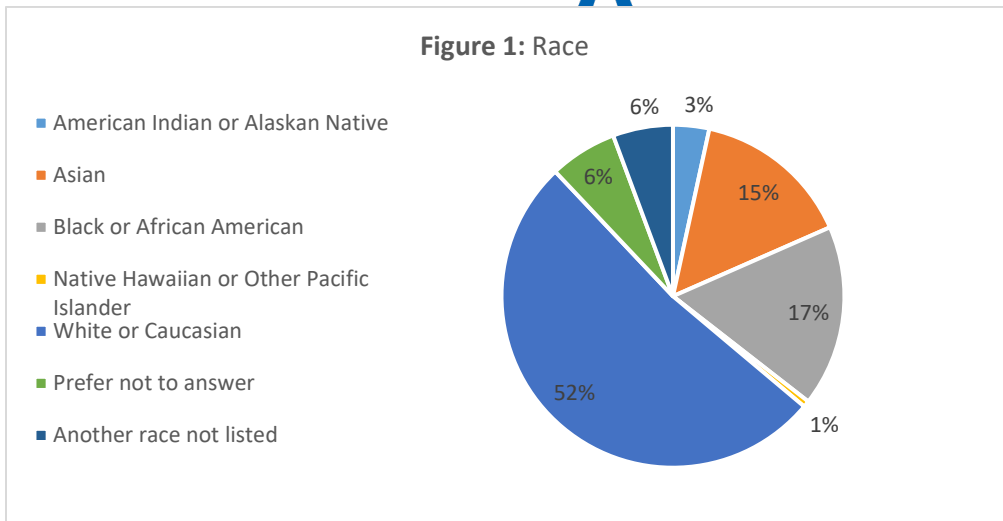
In terms of satisfaction within their major, the top seven aspects students ranked as excellent were: *the major/department as a whole* (48%), *clarity of degree requirements* (48%), *quality of upper division courses* (47%), *sensitivity to cultural needs and difference among students* (46%), *overall quality of faculty* (46%), *opportunities for interaction with faculty* (45%), *availability and accuracy of information about major* (45%), and *overall quality of advising* (45%). In fact, most either strongly agreed or agreed that *their major gave them a sense of competence in their field* (93%) and that *class sizes were appropriate* (92%).

After graduating, most students indicated they intend to pursue employment (75%) or continue their education (20%). For those whose plans were to pursue employment, around 42% are currently seeking employment, and 37% have already secured full-time employment at the time of graduation. Another 13% chose to continue employment with their current employer.

	Total (%) "Very Well" and "Adequately Prepared"
Table 3: Academic Preparation	
Identifying, formulating, and solving problems	96%
Considering other people's viewpoint	96%
Understanding professional and ethical responsibilities	95%
Gathering and analyzing information to make conclusions	95%
Collaborating with other people in a team setting	94%
Considering the impact of my behavior and actions on others	94%
Expressing my thoughts and ideas well in writing	94%
Thinking outside the box and generating new ideas	94%
Applying what I learned in the classroom to situations in the real-world	93%

Academic Preparation: The percentage of students who perceived themselves as very well and adequately prepared across sixteen different categories ranged between 83% and 96%. Table 3 depicts the top nine areas. Most importantly, the students' perception of individual preparedness directly aligns with five of the Texas Core Curriculum Objectives: Written and Oral Communication Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, Social Responsibility, and Critical Thinking. These also reflect marketable skills that are highly valued by employers elsewhere.

In terms of demographics, 34% self-identified as Hispanic Latino, 67% as Female, 3% as International, and most were between 22 and 24 years old (36%). Figure 1 shows the percentage broken down by race. More than half of the graduates (52%) self-identified as White, while 17% were Black and 15% Asian.



Most graduating seniors transferred to UTA from another institution (61%), and a little over half (51%) were first generation students. 75% of them also expect a salary of \$60,000 or above upon graduation. Table 4 provides additional information on these individuals.

Around 91% of the respondents affirmed that they felt neutral, safe, or very safe to attend face-to-face classes in view of **Covid-19**, and 68% affirmed that it didn't take them longer to complete their degree due to the pandemic disruption. Overall, the survey shows students' high satisfaction with their experience at UTA, as well as their confidence in UTA's ability to prepare them for the future.

Table 4: Description of Graduating Students	%
Transferred from another institution	61%
First generation students	51%
Lived outside of Arlington	72%
Employed 31 or more hours per week	73%
Finished degree in 4 years or less	64%
Used grants, scholarships, and loans to complete degree	37%
Took classes at UTA and another institution on the same term	30%

³ Race as reported is consistent with The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board guidelines.

Response Bias Analysis of the Undergraduate Exit Survey

Introduction

The response bias analysis was conducted to investigate which students are responding to the survey, and what differences, if any, there are between those responding and those choosing to abstain from participating in the survey. This analysis was based on the data obtained for fall 2023 and spring 2024. A semi-random group of 200 graduating students who had not answered the surveys during the period of administration was selected (90 from FA23 and 110 from SP24) and invited by mail in July 2024 to participate in a sample of the original survey, where 13 questions were asked in exchange for a \$25 Amazon Gift Card. The non-respondent group was a proportional representation of the graduates' demographics for each college/school/division. From those, 40 responded to the survey (20%).

Findings

1. College and Demographic Representativeness

A proportion analysis of the representativeness of the number of respondents in relation to the number of graduates regarding gender and race was performed for each college. Overrepresentation was assessed through pairwise comparisons between colleges/school/division using the z-test. All colleges/school/division are overrepresented when compared to CAPP, which had a significantly lower response rate. The School of Social Work is overrepresented in comparison to CONHI, COENG, COLA, and COS, with SSW students responding to the survey at a significantly higher rate.

Students identified as female are overrepresented in comparison to males at UTA during fall 2023, responding to the surveys at a higher rate ($z=2.12$, $p<0.05$), though the response rates between females and males were not significantly different in the spring 2024 data. Blacks are also overrepresented when compared to Hispanics ($z=2.26$, $p<0.05$), participating in the survey at a significantly higher rate year around (45% and 38% for FA23 and SP24 respectively, in comparison to Hispanics 38% and 33% for FA23 and SP24, respectively).

2. Demographic Differences in Survey Responses

There were significant differences in most survey questions and items regarding gender, race, and ethnicity ($N=2,320$, $p<0.05$). For instance, females and Hispanics tend to rate their level of preparedness higher than males and non-Hispanics, while the latter groups tend to be more critical of UTA in general. In general, Asian and foreign students were also more likely to score lower in their sense of preparedness and satisfaction with UTA when compared to other races, especially Black and Hispanics, who were more inclined to score higher on those aspects.

3. Differences between Respondents and Non-Respondents

3.1. Demographics

The Chi-Square Tests result indicated that there were significant differences between respondents ($N=2,320$) and non-respondents ($N=4,047$) regarding gender (Fisher's Exact Test, $p<0.05$) and race ($\chi^2=21.843$, $df=8$, $p<0.01$). However, no significant differences were found for ethnicity and first-generation students. The difference between respondents and non-respondents was significant for both female (37% and 63% respectively) and male students (34% and 66%, respectively). A significant difference was observed between respondents and non-respondents from Asian (33% and 67%, respectively) and Black ancestry (41% and 59%, respectively). Only 34% of the graduating students were Hispanics and 47% were first-generation students. From these, 35% of Hispanics and 37% of first-generation students responded to the survey.

3.2. Survey Responses

Similarities in survey responses between respondents (N=2,320) and non-respondents (N=40) were also tested using Welch's ANOVA. For instance, when asked to select the top three factors that influenced their decision to attend UTA for their degree, the items that showed significant differences in responses between these two groups were: *availability of major program in area of interest* ($p < 0.001$); *influence of relatives and friends* ($p < 0.001$); and *reputation of major program in area of interest* ($p < 0.05$). Availability of major program in area of interest was certainly one of the drivers for choosing UTA for both groups, but especially for non-respondents (80%). Most respondents and non-respondents reported that relatives and friends had little influence in their choice for UTA (80% and 95%, respectively). Similar results were found regarding the reputation of the major program in their area of interest, which seemed to have had little importance in the decision of both respondents and non-respondents to attend UTA (81% and 65%, respectively).

There are also significant differences between respondents and non-respondents as far as recommending UTA to a friend or relative ($p < 0.01$). The data shows that 55% of non-respondents would make a strong recommendation, against 45% of respondents.

In terms of preparedness, the only item that showed significant difference was *applying what was learned in the classrooms to situations in the real world* ($p \leq 0.05$). This item showed a significant difference of responses between respondents and non-respondents, with the latter feeling poorly or not at all prepared at a significantly higher rate (13%).

Other questions that showed significant differences were related to *post-graduation employment* ($p \leq 0.001$), and *salary range upon graduation* ($p \leq 0.001$). A higher percentage of non-respondents have already secured full-time employment (61%), against 37% of respondents. Most respondents were seeking employment at the time of the survey administration (43%). This difference could be attributed to the timing of non-respondents' participation in the survey which occurred in July 2024, months after their graduation, which explains the relatively higher proportion of full-time employment for this category. There is also a higher percentage of non-respondents in the higher salary brackets in comparison to respondents.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on these results, there is evidence of response bias regarding college and demographic representability, with some colleges being significantly overrepresented in terms of response rates over others. A focused effort from CAPP, COLA, COS, CONHI, and COEng's leadership in reaching out and encouraging the participation of their students in the survey is highly recommended to mitigate biases results. Efforts to reach out especially to male and Hispanic students would also decrease demographic discrepancies in the results.

Regarding demographic differences in survey responses, the results were not surprising. Within such a diverse population of students, it would be expected that students of different demographics would hold different expectations and perceptions regarding their academic experience. Disaggregating the results based on these variables would provide more clarity regarding the experience of different demographic groups. Caution is advised against generalizations and extrapolations of survey results without taking into consideration potential demographic differences.

While the sample of non-respondents participating in the sample survey was very small in comparison to the overall number of respondents, it was enough to provide us with some evidence of response bias in the survey. The results showed that more females tend to respond to the survey than males, which is also a trend observed in public surveys in general. Blacks are also more inclined to respond than Asians.

Respondents and non-respondents also tend to answer the survey differently. Despite the biases found in the employment and salary data due to differences in timing of the survey administration between these two groups, it is clear that the non-respondent group have a significantly higher proportion of students who feel poorly or not prepared at all, regardless of their significantly higher inclination towards recommending UTA to friends and relatives. The fact that UTA offers major programs in their areas of interest is a significant factor in their decision to enroll.

These results point to the importance of taking survey results with caution, understanding that whole subgroups of students may not be represented in those results. A targeted and consistent initiative towards incentivizing greater participation of these subgroups could be effective in improving their survey engagement.