



# SF State

## Senior Exit Survey

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Academic Institutional Research ([air.sfsu.edu](http://air.sfsu.edu))



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## **SF State Senior Exit Survey**

### **Introduction**

The Senior Exit Survey is conducted by the Academic Institutional Research (AIR) office of San Francisco State University to provide institutional performance assessment of SF State's undergraduate program. Revised in February 2014, the survey is intended to facilitate evaluation of the level of students' satisfaction with their SF State experience as a whole and with their major program, their involvement with academic, campus or community activities, the improvement of their intellectual abilities, and their personal and social development in other areas. Students encounter the survey online and must proceed through it in order to reach the undergraduate application for graduation. The only survey question that must be completed, however, is the request for their student identification number, the validity of which is not confirmed at that time. Usable responses to the survey questions were obtained from 1,887 of the undergraduates submitting graduation applications between February 13, 2014 and August 24, 2014.

### **Executive Summary**

Responses were similar to the results of previous Senior Exit and other student surveys. Course availability and advising continued to be areas of dissatisfaction, while faculty, instruction, and skill development continued to be areas of satisfaction. Although three quarters of the Senior Exit Survey respondents indicated that they would definitely or probably recommend SF State to their friends and two thirds wanted to acknowledge a specific person or program for having an especially positive impact on their SF State experience, four in ten indicated that they would not be graduating in the time they expected, with four in ten of those students attributing the delay to the lack of availability of courses. Corroborating this, course availability was the most frequently named category of the one thing that, if changes were made, would have improved their overall SF State experience the most (38%), followed next by advising (15%). Satisfaction with their major program was reportedly high, with 71-79% satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of teaching, accessibility of faculty, faculty interest in student success, and academic rigor of courses. Slightly fewer (64%) were as satisfied with the quality of academic advising by faculty in their major. Online courses in their major were taken by four in ten respondents of whom slightly more than half were satisfied or very satisfied. The most frequent criticism of online courses was that there was too little interaction with others (including the instructor) in the course. Student involvement in various academic, campus, and community activities was low, with roughly half indicating no involvement. Intellectual abilities reportedly improved to a considerable or great extent in six to seven in ten respondents during their SF State enrollment. Half or more of the respondents reported other personal or social development to a considerable or great extent.

## Responses for Each Survey Question

Presented below for each question is the distribution of responses by all who answered each survey question. Also reported are any statistically significant differences in responses between groups of students by demographic category<sup>1</sup>. Tables presenting frequencies and percentages of responses by demographics, i.e., by age group, gender, race/ethnicity, college of major, and geographic origin, for each question are available upon request from wendys@sfsu.edu.

### Your Overall SF State Experience

#### Will you have graduated in the time you expected?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	1125	60%
No	739	40%
Total	1864	100%

Respondents having majors in the College of Liberal & Creative Arts were significantly more likely, and those in Science & Engineering less likely, than were students having majors in other colleges to report that they were graduating in the time they expected.

#### If you will not have graduated in the time you expected, what is the main reason why not?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Financial pressure or the need to work	130	18%
Lack of availability of courses	296	40%
Change in major or indecision about a major	80	11%
Took one or more semesters off	53	7%
Family responsibilities	27	4%
Other	147	20%
Total	733	100%

Students 24 years of age and under were significantly more likely than were students 25 years of age and over to indicate that a lack of availability of courses is the main reason for their delay in graduation, while students in the older age group were significantly more likely than were students in the younger group to cite financial pressure or the need to work as the reason. Respondents whose major is in the College of Liberal & Creative Arts were significantly less likely than were those whose major is in another college to attribute their prolonged studies to a lack of availability of courses.

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<sup>1</sup> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Native American/Alaska Native, and Unknown are not included in the statistical analyses by race/ethnicity, and Interdisciplinary Studies & Other and the colleges of Education and Ethnic Studies are not included in the statistical analyses by college, in order to prevent distortion of the results by the extremely small numbers of respondents in those race/ethnicity and college categories.

**Would you recommend SF State to your friends?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Definitely yes	677	36%
Probably yes	743	40%
Unsure	254	14%
Probably not	124	7%
Definitely not	61	3%
Total	1859	100%

A recommendation of SF State to their friends was significantly more likely to be made by students 25 and over than by students 24 and under. Female students were significantly more likely than were males to recommend SF State. Students having Liberal & Creative Arts majors were significantly more likely than were students in Science & Engineering or Business to do so.

**Is there a person or program you would like to acknowledge for having a particularly positive impact on your experience at SF State?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	1215	66%
No	628	34%
Total	1843	100%

College of Business students were significantly less likely than were students with majors in Liberal & Creative Arts or Health & Social Sciences to want to acknowledge a specific person or program. Students from Southern California were significantly less likely than were local students to want to do so. (The opportunity to specify a person or program was provided.)

**Choose the category of the one thing that, if changes were made, would have improved your overall SF State experience the most.**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Advising	281	15%
Campus facilities	73	4%
Campus life	169	9%
Course availability	690	38%
Degree requirements	111	6%
Financial concerns or cost of attendance	198	11%
Instruction/teaching	100	6%
Parking and transportation	131	7%
Other	69	4%
Total	1822	100%

Students 24 years of age and under and male students were significantly more likely than were those 25 years of age and over or female students to indicate that a change in campus life would have improved their SF State experience most. White students were significantly more likely, and Asian students less likely, than were students in other race/ethnicity categories to report that changes in advising would have improved their experience most. Changes affecting financial concerns or cost of attendance reportedly would have most improved the SF State experience of Liberal & Creative Arts majors significantly more than that of students having majors in another college. (Students were given the opportunity to elaborate on their responses. The additional information was considered but was redundant.)

### **Satisfaction with Your Major Program**

**Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the following aspects of your major:**

#### **Quality of teaching in your major**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	585	33%
Satisfied	811	46%
Neutral	260	15%
Dissatisfied	74	4%
Very dissatisfied	41	2%
Total	1771	100%

Liberal & Creative Arts majors expressed significantly greater satisfaction with the quality of teaching in their major program than did students having majors in other colleges.

#### **Accessibility of faculty in your major**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	560	32%
Satisfied	784	45%
Neutral	310	18%
Dissatisfied	61	4%
Very dissatisfied	47	3%
Total	1762	100%

Significantly greater satisfaction with the accessibility of faculty in their major was reported by students 25 year of age and older than by younger students. Liberal & Creative Arts majors expressed significantly greater satisfaction with the accessibility of faculty in their major than did students having majors in another college.

**Faculty interest in your academic success in your major**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	564	32%
Satisfied	692	39%
Neutral	369	21%
Dissatisfied	78	4%
Very dissatisfied	56	3%
Total	1759	100%

Liberal & Creative Arts majors expressed significantly greater satisfaction with faculty interest in their academic success than did Science & Engineering or Business majors.

**Academic rigor of classes in your major**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	425	24%
Satisfied	869	49%
Neutral	356	20%
Dissatisfied	62	4%
Very dissatisfied	46	3%
Total	1758	100%

Significantly greater satisfaction with the academic rigor of classes in their major was reported by students 25 year of age and older than by younger students. Liberal & Creative Arts majors expressed significantly greater satisfaction than did students having majors in Science & Engineering or Business.

**Quality of academic advising by faculty in your major**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	487	28%
Satisfied	641	37%
Neutral	415	24%
Dissatisfied	127	7%
Very dissatisfied	87	5%
Total	1757	100%

Students 25 years of age and over reported significantly greater satisfaction with the quality of academic advising by faculty in their major than did younger students. Liberal & Creative Arts majors expressed significantly greater satisfaction than did students in Science & Engineering or Business.

**Online Courses in Your Major Program**

**Did you take any online courses in your major?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	749	42%
No	1028	58%
Total	1777	100%

Asian students were significantly more likely than were students in other race/ethnicity categories to report taking online courses in their major, as were Business students relative to those having majors in another college.

**Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the online courses you took in your major.**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	132	18%
Satisfied	297	40%
Neutral	197	27%
Dissatisfied	55	7%
Very dissatisfied	54	7%
Total	735	100%

Among those taking online courses in their major, students 25 and older reported significantly greater satisfaction with the online courses than did younger students.

**What was the main reason you were dissatisfied with online coursework in your major?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Course was not as rigorous as a face-to-face course	65	9%
Deadlines were not clear	28	4%
Course was not well organized	64	9%
Too little interaction with others in the course	129	19%
Faculty did not respond promptly to questions	28	4%
Software was difficult to navigate	36	5%
Course was more demanding than a face-to-face course	79	11%
I did not have the self-discipline to stay current in the course	80	12%
Something else	185	27%
Total	694	100%



Among only students taking online courses in their major, those in Business were significantly more likely than were other majors to cite poor organization of the course as their main source of dissatisfaction, while those in Science & Engineering were significantly more likely than were others to report too little interaction with others in the course. (Students who selected “Something else” were given the opportunity to specify what that was. Responses were categorized and did not contribute sufficient new information to warrant discussion.)

### **Your Involvement in Academic, Campus, and Community Activities**

**What was your level of involvement in the following activities while enrolled at SF State?**

#### **Internship or field experience that was not required by your major**

Response	Frequency	Percent
High	253	15%
Moderate	355	21%
Low	245	14%
None	869	51%
Total	1722	100%

Health & Social Sciences majors reported a significantly higher level of involvement in internships or field experience that was not required by their major than did students having majors in Liberal & Creative Arts.

#### **Community service or volunteer work**

Response	Frequency	Percent
High	201	12%
Moderate	391	23%
Low	385	22%
None	743	43%
Total	1720	100%

A significantly higher level of involvement in community service or volunteer work was reported by female students than by male students. White students reported significantly less such involvement than did students in the other race/ethnicity categories. Students having majors in Health & Social Sciences indicated significantly greater involvement in this than did those having majors in another college.

**Work on a research project with a faculty member**

Response	Frequency	Percent
High	126	7%
Moderate	274	16%
Low	256	15%
None	1056	62%
Total	1712	100%

Male students reported significantly greater involvement than did female students in work on research projects with faculty members. White students reported significantly less such involvement than did Asian or Latino students. Science & Engineering majors indicated significantly greater involvement in research projects with faculty than did students in Business or Liberal & Creative Arts.

**Study abroad**

Response	Frequency	Percent
High	137	8%
Moderate	123	7%
Low	86	5%
None	1367	80%
Total	1713	100%

Non-local non-Southern California students reported significantly greater involvement in studying abroad than did local students.

**Student organizations**

Response	Frequency	Percent
High	174	10%
Moderate	295	17%
Low	354	21%
None	896	52%
Total	1719	100%

Students 24 and under reported significantly more involvement in student organizations than did those 25 and over. African American and Asian students reported significantly more involvement than did White students or those of two or more non-Latino races. Liberal & Creative Arts students reported significantly less student organization involvement than did Health & Social Sciences or Business majors. Local students reported significantly less involvement than did students from all other areas outside of Southern California.

**Culminating senior experience (e.g., comprehensive exam, capstone course, thesis/senior project, student teaching, etc.)**

Response	Frequency	Percent
High	214	13%
Moderate	372	22%
Low	275	16%
None	855	50%
Total	1716	100%

Significantly more participation in a culminating senior experience was reported by males than by females. Health & Social Sciences majors reported significantly more such involvement than did Business or Liberal & Creative Arts majors. Non-local non-Southern California students reported significantly more participation in this than did local students.

**Extracurricular athletic or physical recreation activities**

Response	Frequency	Percent
High	145	8%
Moderate	272	16%
Low	283	17%
None	1019	59%
Total	1719	100%

Reported involvement in extracurricular athletic or physical recreation activities was significantly greater among students 24 years of age and under than among older students and among males compared to females. Liberal & Creative Arts majors reported significantly less involvement than did students in Health & Social Sciences or Business. Non-local non-Southern California students reported significantly more participation in this than did local students.

**Improvement in Your Intellectual Abilities**

**During your SF State experience, to what extent did your abilities improve in each of these areas?**

**Quantitative reasoning**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	309	18%
To a considerable extent	668	39%
Somewhat	550	32%
Not very much	112	7%
Not at all	68	4%
Total	1707	100%

Responses did not differ significantly on the basis of any of the demographic characteristics included in this analysis.

**Writing**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	425	25%
To a considerable extent	653	38%
Somewhat	446	26%
Not very much	130	8%
Not at all	48	3%
Total	1702	100%

Latino students reported significantly more improvement in their writing skills than did Asian or White students. Liberal & Creative Arts and Health & Social Sciences majors reported significantly more improvement in this than did Business or Science & Engineering students.

**Oral communication**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	469	28%
To a considerable extent	619	37%
Somewhat	465	27%
Not very much	103	6%
Not at all	38	2%
Total	1694	100%

Students 24 years of age and under reported significantly greater improvement of their oral communication skills than did older students. Latino students reported significantly more improvement in this than did White students. Science & Engineering students reported significantly less improvement in this area than did students in the other colleges.

**Critical thinking (e.g., evaluating the truth of evidence or arguments, reasoning clearly and accurately, solving non-mathematical problems, drawing logical conclusions)**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	552	33%
To a considerable extent	670	39%
Somewhat	375	22%
Not very much	68	4%
Not at all	34	2%
Total	1699	100%

Latino students and those of two or more non-Latino races reported significantly more improvement in their critical thinking skills than did White or Asian students. Liberal & Creative Arts majors reported significantly more improvement in this than did Business majors.

**Information literacy (e.g., finding, evaluating, and using information in various forms, information research skills, fact checking, distinguishing fact from opinion)**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	527	31%
To a considerable extent	670	39%
Somewhat	391	23%
Not very much	82	5%
Not at all	34	2%
Total	1704	100%

Latino students and those of two or more non-Latino races reported significantly more improvement in information literacy than did White or Asian students.

**Your Personal and Social Development**

**Please indicate the extent to which your experience at SF State contributed to the following:**

**Exposure to cultures or groups different from your own**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	564	33%
To a considerable extent	521	31%
Somewhat	429	25%
Not very much	117	7%
Not at all	56	3%
Total	1687	100%

Students 24 years of age and under indicated that their SF State experience contributed to their exposure to different cultures or groups to a significantly greater extent than did those 25 and over. Female students reported a significantly greater contribution to this than did male students. Latino students reported a significantly greater contribution by SF State to this than did White or Asian students. Local students indicated that their SF State experience did this to a significantly smaller extent than did students from Southern California or all other areas.

**Awareness of the ethical implications of your own and others' actions**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	543	32%
To a considerable extent	539	32%
Somewhat	442	26%
Not very much	107	6%
Not at all	56	3%
Total	1687	100%

Students 24 years of age and under indicated that their SF State experience contributed to their awareness of the ethical implications of their own and others' actions to a significantly greater extent than did those 25 and over. Female students reported a significantly greater contribution to this than did male students. Latino students reported a significantly greater contribution by their SF State experience to this than did White or Asian students. Science & Engineering majors indicated a significantly smaller contribution to this than did students in Health & Social Sciences or Liberal & Creative Arts.

**Acquiring a broad general education**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	455	27%
To a considerable extent	626	37%
Somewhat	477	28%
Not very much	89	5%
Not at all	40	2%
Total	1687	100%

Female students reported that their SF State experience contributed to their acquisition of a broad general education to a significantly greater extent than did male students. Latino students reported a significantly greater contribution by their SF State experience to this than did White or Asian students.

**Development of leadership skills**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	373	22%
To a considerable extent	507	30%
Somewhat	552	33%
Not very much	176	10%
Not at all	77	5%
Total	1685	100%

Students 24 years of age and under indicated that their SF State experience contributed to the development of leadership skills to a significantly greater extent than did those 25 and over. Female students reported a significantly greater contribution to this than did male students. Latino students reported a significantly greater contribution by their SF State experience to this than did White or Asian students. Health & Social Sciences majors indicated a significantly greater contribution by SF State to this than did students in Liberal & Creative Arts or Science & Engineering.

**Learning effectively on your own**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	541	32%
To a considerable extent	616	37%
Somewhat	414	25%
Not very much	72	4%
Not at all	45	3%
Total	1688	100%

Students 24 years of age and under indicated that their SF State experience contributed to learning effectively on their own to a significantly greater extent than did those 25 and over. Latino students reported a significantly greater contribution by SF State to this than did White or Asian students.

**Commitment to social justice**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	397	24%
To a considerable extent	493	29%
Somewhat	500	30%
Not very much	183	11%
Not at all	110	7%
Total	1683	100%

Female students reported a significantly greater contribution by their SF State experience to their commitment to social justice than did male students. Latino students reported a significantly greater contribution by SF State to this than did White or Asian students. Liberal & Creative Arts and Health & Social Sciences students reported a significantly greater contribution to this than did those having majors in Business or Science & Engineering.

**Commitment to civic engagement**

Response	Frequency	Percent
To a great extent	359	21%
To a considerable extent	473	28%
Somewhat	535	32%
Not very much	191	11%
Not at all	129	8%
Total	1687	100%

Female students reported a significantly greater contribution by their SF State experience to their commitment to civic engagement than did male students. Latino students reported a significantly greater contribution by SF State to this than did White or Asian students. Health & Social Sciences students reported a significantly greater contribution to this than did those having majors in any of the other colleges.

**Your Post-Graduation Plans**

**What is most likely to be your principle activity upon graduation?**

Response	Frequency	Percent
Employment	1112	65%
Starting or raising a family	15	1%
Military	9	1%
Volunteer service	38	2%
Undergraduate study	24	1%
Graduate study	391	23%
Other	130	8%
Total	1719	100%

Latino students and those having majors in Health & Social Sciences or Science & Engineering were significantly more likely than were students of other race/ethnicity categories or having majors in other colleges to indicate that their most likely post-graduation activity would be graduate study. Business majors were significantly more likely than were students having majors in other college to indicate that employment is their most probably activity upon graduation.



## Discussion

Responses were consistent with those of previous student surveys, including the areas of the greatest and least satisfaction. Although seven in ten respondents indicated that they would recommend SF State to their friends, four in ten indicated that they would not be graduating in the time they expected. Nearly half of those students attributed the delay to a lack of availability of courses. Course availability was also the most frequently named single thing that, if changes were made, would have improved their overall SF State experience the most, followed next by advising.

Students having majors in Liberal & Creative Arts expressed significantly greater satisfaction with their **overall SF State experience** than did students having majors in other colleges. Specifically, they were more likely than were other groups of students to indicate that they would recommend SF State (as were students 25 years of age and over and female students), more likely to report that they would be graduating in the time they expected, and less likely to attribute any delay in graduation to a lack of course availability.

Overall, satisfaction with **major programs** was high, with at least 65% of respondents expressing satisfaction with the quality of teaching, accessibility of faculty, faculty interest in student success, academic rigor of courses, and quality of academic advising by faculty in their major. Students having majors in Liberal & Creative Arts reported significantly greater satisfaction with their major program (as did students 25 years of age and over to a smaller extent) than did other groups of students.

Across all respondents, **student involvement in various academic, campus, and community activities** was low, with roughly half reporting no involvement at all. Students having majors in Health & Social Sciences reported significantly greater involvement in internships, community service, student organizations, culminating senior experiences, and extracurricular athletic activities than did students having majors in other colleges. Students 24 years of age and under reported significantly greater participation in student organizations and extracurricular athletic or physical recreation activities than did students 25 and over.

Of all respondents, roughly seven in ten reported that their **intellectual abilities** improved to a considerable or great extent during their SF State enrollment. Latino students reported significantly greater improvement in this than did other groups of students.

Similarly, half or more of all respondents reported other **personal or social development** to a considerable or great extent. More specifically, students 24 years of age and under, female students, and Latino students reported a significantly greater contribution by their SF State experience to their personal and social development than did other groups of students.