Higher Education Leadership, MA

School of Leadership and Education Sciences

University of San Diego

2014 Exit Survey Results

This report was prepared by the USD-SOLES Office of Assessment on October 10, 2014.
Executive Summary

Exit Survey Overview

The School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES) - Office of Assessment administers the Exit Survey to graduating students at the University of San Diego (USD) annually. The Exit Survey affords students the opportunity to reflect on their program experiences and to provide valuable feedback utilized for program review. This report is specific to the results for the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program for 2014, with 2013 data provided for comparison purposes. General survey items address students’ satisfaction with courses, faculty, advisors, intellectual climate, support services, and communication. Graduating students are also provided with program specific survey items relating to knowledge, skills, and graduate assistantships.

Rating Scale

Three different five-point rating scales were used in this survey. The goal is to have response ratings in the four to five range for each item, where 5 is Strongly Agree and 4 is Agree, 5 is Extremely Well and 4 is Fairly Well, and 5 is Very Satisfied and 4 is Satisfied.

Response Rate

Table 1 shows the percent of USD-Higher Education Leadership, MA graduating students who responded to the Exit Survey in 2014, with 2013 data provided for comparison purposes. Seven of the ten USD-Higher Education Leadership, MA graduating students responded to the 2014 Exit Survey and twelve of the fifteen graduating students responded to the 2013 Exit Survey; yielding response rates of 70% and 80% respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Completion Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Higher Education Leadership, MA Graduates*</th>
<th>Total Number of Higher Education Leadership, MA Respondents</th>
<th>Exit Survey Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Refers to the number of graduates for which correct email addresses were obtained.
Summary of Findings

Graduating students were asked to rate aspects of the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program in nine areas: faculty; advisors; intellectual climate; program support and communication; university support; program course content; enhanced knowledge and skills, graduate assistantship experience; and the overall program. All but one of the 2014 mean ratings were in the desired four to five range (using a 5 point scale), with the exception having a mean rating of 3.9. All but one of the 2014 Cronbach’s alpha values were in the .83 to .96 range, suggesting relatively high internal consistency of survey item responses. (Note that a reliability coefficient of .70 or higher is considered “acceptable” in most social science research situations.) Figure 1 shows the comparison of 2014 means with 2013 means. These ratings indicate high levels of student satisfaction with the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program at the University of San Diego.
Factors Most Important to Overall Satisfaction with the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program

When Higher Education Leadership, MA graduating students were asked which factors were most important to their overall satisfaction with the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program, they cited faculty, coursework, learning from peers, linking theory to application, their cohort, and the Student Affairs/SOLES Collaborative (SASC) graduate assistantship as contributing to their overall satisfaction. A sample of graduating students’ comments regarding overall satisfaction is shown in Table 2 and in Table A10 in the Appendix of the full report.

Student Suggestions for Improving the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program

When Higher Education Leadership, MA graduating students were asked for suggestions for improving the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program, they listed: greater availability of faculty, adjustments to the seminar course, improved communication of events and expectations, greater flexibility for commuters and students working full-time, and bridging the gap between SASC students and non-SASC students. A sample of graduating students’ comments is shown in Table 3 and in Table A11 in the Appendix of the full report.

When Higher Education Leadership, MA graduating students were asked to share what particular skills, areas or topics not covered but should be in the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program, they listed: assessment, more counseling/advising based conversations, and mentorship.

Fulfillment of Program Goals

Exit survey data from Higher Education Leadership, MA graduating students serve as evidence of program goal fulfillment.

- Provide professionals dedicated to the field of higher education with the ability to make an enhanced impact by expanding the way they collect and process information; including research, organizational theory, change and more.
- Provide students with higher education leadership opportunities via graduate assistantships and international experiences.
- Prepares students for positions in higher education administration and student affairs at two-year and four-year colleges and universities.
Table 2

*Sample of Students' Comments Relating to Factors Most Important to Overall Satisfaction with the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program*

The support from my faculty advisor, SASC seminar professors, & professors. I also enjoyed all of my classes and felt challenged appropriately--I think it was helpful that I balanced taking Higher Ed classes w/ Leadership classes each semester.

The knowledge received. The network of instructors to be able to bring "high end professionals" that are related to what we were learning. Learning can be applied in the workplace but also personal life.

I really appreciated the amount of general leadership courses that I was able to take within the Higher Ed program. I have realized that my exposure to more than just higher education classes has been incredibly beneficial for myself both professionally and personally. [Professor] was also a very important of my experience in the program. The classes he taught in the Higher Ed program were great and really helped to prepare me for work in the field. He was also very supportive and encouraging as both my academic advisor and research advisor.

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Table 3

*Sample of Students' Suggestions for Improving the Higher Education Leadership, MA Program*

Keep in mind the needs of commuter and full time employed students. . .

Specifically within the Higher Ed program, I think more could be done to bridge the gaps between SASC students and non-SASC students. . .

. . . I think the seminar should continue to focus on the job search, but add more of a focus on feedback for Action Research throughout.

I think ALL Higher Ed Leadership students should be required to take Dynamics of Race Gender & Culture or Multicultural