



**UConn School Psychology
Program Climate Survey Results**

AY 2020-2021

Overview

This report contains the results of a climate survey conducted in May 2020 for the University of Connecticut School Psychology program. This climate survey was conducted by students for students, as part of student-led diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. As a result of discussion on attracting and retaining students; ensuring students feel valued, welcomed, and comfortable within the program; and avoiding experiences of harassment or discrimination, it was determined that a climate survey would be beneficial.

The questions were drawn from climate surveys conducted by other graduate programs and tailored to fit UConn's School Psychology program (see Appendix A for Full Survey Questions). Qualitative questions were included to better capture student experiences (see Appendix B for list of Qualitative Questions). Additionally, some questions pertaining to specific concerns that had been raised by UConn School Psychology students in the past were included. See Appendix C for a general/brief overview.

The survey was created in Google Forms and distributed via email to all current members of the program. Assurances were made to participants regarding the use of their data, including: (a) all data would be kept anonymous, (b) raw data would be reviewed only by members of the student team who developed the survey, (c) results would be reported in aggregate, and (d) students would have the opportunity to review results and request revisions prior to submission of the report to faculty. As an incentive for participation, students were offered the chance to enter a raffle for a \$10 gift card.

Please direct any questions or requests for clarification to
Heather Kwolek and Michael Li.

Contents

Overview	1
Introduction	2
Barriers	3
<i>Funding</i>	4
Program Experience	7
<i>Harassment/Discrimination</i>	8
Student & Faculty Dynamics	10
Qualitative Analysis	14
Program Strengths	14
Program Barriers	16
Potential Changes	19
Appendix A: Full Survey	21
Appendix B: Qualitative Questions	45
Appendix C: Fast Facts & Figures	46
Acknowledgements	54

Introduction

Results clearly showed strengths and areas of improvement. While full results are discussed further, a single overview question will be discussed here. **Specifically, participants were asked whether, if they were to start their graduate career again, they would choose school psychology, the same advisor, and UConn again.**

Encouragingly, 90% of respondents indicated that they would probably or definitely choose school psychology again, and 71% stated that they would probably or definitely choose the same graduate advisor. In both of those questions, the most commonly chosen response was “definitely.” Seventy-six percent of respondents indicated that they would likely choose to attend UConn again, as well, although 19% did state that they would probably not have chosen UConn. Overall, these results suggest that while our program may have room for improvement, it has been an overall positive experience for most of our students. Most of our students would choose to remain in the field of school psychology, at UConn, under the same graduate advisor.

Thus, the question remains as to how best to improve the student experience for our current and future students. Our examination of student experiences within the UConn School Psychology program is included below.

Barriers

Many students reported multiple barriers to full participation in the program, or to remaining in the program at all. **Forty-three percent of respondents had considered leaving our School Psychology program.** Of those who had considered leaving, over 75% selected workload demands as one reason they had considered leaving the program. Other selected reasons for considering leaving the program were financial difficulties, personal or familial difficulties, and difficulties with one’s advisor.

Students reported many different obstacles, as well. **Most importantly, workload (i.e., feeling overwhelmed and course load) and mental health (e.g., self-confidence, mental health issues) appear to be the biggest obstacles experienced by our students.** They comprise four of the top five major obstacles. Knowing that stress is strongly related to mental health concerns, it is likely that workload demands contribute to mental health concerns and vice versa. Financial concerns appear to be the next biggest obstacles faced by our students. Full results can be seen in Table 1, below.

Table 1

Student Perception of Experiences as Obstacles to Graduate School Progress

Experiences	Major Obstacle (%)	Minor Obstacle (%)	No Obstacle (%)	Don’t Know/NA (%)
Feeling overwhelmed by all you have to do	57.1	33.3	9.5	0.0
Availability of funding	38.1	33.3	28.6	0.0
Your self-confidence	33.3	28.6	33.3	0.0
Course load	28.6	47.6	23.8	0.0
Mental health issues	28.6	33.3	38.1	0.0
Cost of housing	23.8	33.3	38.1	4.8
Time management	14.3	33.3	52.4	0.0
Availability of faculty	9.5	47.6	42.9	0.0
Social isolation	9.5	47.6	38.1	4.8
Program structure or requirements	4.8	42.9	52.4	0.0
Graduate assistant responsibilities	4.8	28.6	52.4	14.3

Funding

Many students report financial concerns or funding difficulties as an obstacle to their progress or a major stressor for them within the program. We examine those concerns in more detail here.

About 10% of respondents report struggling financially, while roughly 60% of respondents reported being “tight but doing fine.” About 70% of respondents reported that tuition and healthcare had been concerns for them throughout graduate school. **Half of respondents reported that housing has been or is a concern for them**, while 18% reported that technology and utilities have been a concern and **12% reported that food has been or is a concern for them**. Consequently, a small but significant percentage of our students have struggled with basic living expenses throughout their time in graduate school.

When asked what they had used to support themselves financially, most students reported relying on graduate assistantships (85.7%) and personal savings (71.4%). However, most students reported relying on multiple resources to support themselves. Students without multiple financial resources to draw upon, or without certain resources (i.e., support from parents, a partner, or personal savings), may find our program financially inaccessible. Notably, we did not ask about personal or private loans. This should be included in a future survey. Full results can be seen in Table 2, below.

Respondents were also asked about the amount and availability of financial support within the program. Thirty-eight percent of respondents indicated that the amount of financial support was fair or poor. However, more concerningly, **71.4% of respondents indicated that the *availability* of financial support was fair or poor.**

Table 2

Student Financial Supports Throughout Graduate School

Financial Supports	Percentage Utilized
Graduate assistantships	85.7
Personal savings	71.4
On or off-campus (non-academic) employment	47.6
Support from Parents	42.9
University-funded fellowships	33.3
Need-based financial aid	28.6
Support from spouse	28.6
Hourly research opportunities	4.8
Travel grants	0
External fellowships	0

Given the extremely high percentage of students who rely on graduate assistantships as a form of financial support, restrictions on assistantships or limited availability of assistantships may have a large negative impact on the financial wellbeing (and consequently mental and physical wellbeing) of students in our program.

When asked about their assistantships, 85% of respondents reported having a graduate assistantship (GA). For those who held an assistantship, a third held a full-time GA, a third had two half-time GAs, and a third had one half-time GA. A third of students reported that all of their financial expenses (academic and cost of living) would be covered by their assistantship for the given semester, and slightly more than 25% reported that 76-99% of their expenses would be covered. However, about 25% of students reported that under 50% of their expenses for the semester would be covered by an assistantship. This did include those respondents without an assistantship.

Concerns about financial stress in graduate school are multiplied when one considers that many students take on debt to finance both undergraduate and graduate education. Most of our students entered with debt from their undergraduate degree. While this amount varies widely, **over a quarter of our respondents reported having more than \$40,000 in loans from their undergraduate degree.** Additionally, about **two-thirds of our respondents reported taking out loans to cover expenses for graduate school, as well;** for most students, this is under \$30,000, but a significant percentage did report taking out substantially more than that in loans for graduate school. Full results can be seen in Table 3, below.

Table 3

UConn School Psychology Students with Given Debt Amount

Amount to be repaid	Percentage of Students with Undergraduate Debt Amount	Percentage of Students with Graduate Debt Amount
\$0	42.9	35
\$1-9,999	9.5	10
\$10,000-19,999	4.8	19
\$20,000-29,999	4.8	14.3
\$30,000-39,999	9.5	0
\$40,000-59,999	14.3	15
\$60,000-\$79,999	4.8	5
\$80,000-\$99,999	0	0
\$100,000+	9.5	0

Of particular note, **feelings of being overwhelmed are uniformly high, regardless of GA hours**. Yet, many students indicated that they have a full-time GA (i.e., 20-hour or two 10-hour positions). So, why do many students then choose to take on full-time GAs, especially considering that faculty generally recommend against taking a full-time GA? Students appear to be taking full-time GAs due to financial stress (e.g., reporting concerns with food, housing, debt, etc.). Furthermore, the majority of students with part-time GAs reported holding outside jobs to supplement their income. While holding a full-time GA may be discouraged due to higher levels of workload stress and burden, it is equally crucial to understand that this choice is financially necessary for many students.

These financial concerns also impact students' ability to fully participate in our program and take advantage of important professional and educational opportunities, such as conferences. About two-thirds of our respondents had attended one or two professional conferences during the program. Of the remaining third, half had attended no conferences while half had attended three or more. However, half of our respondents reported having received no additional funding for any conference expenses such as registration, travel, and accommodations. Sixty-five percent of respondents reported that participating in conferences is not affordable for them, and **75% indicated that they had avoided attending professional conferences because of the out-of-pocket expenses**. Given the importance of participation in such activities, this suggests that financial concerns are having a significant negative impact on our students' professional growth.

Some students did report receiving additional funding for conferences. Of those who had received funding, a third received it from our program, a third received funding from their GAs, a quarter received funds from the Connecticut Association of School Psychology, and one respondent reported receiving funding from a research grant. Students may benefit from information on additional funding sources for conferences.

Program Experience

Students were asked about their general experiences within the school psychology program (see Table 4, below). **Perhaps the most common theme was variation - responses reflect a widely varying range of student experiences**, much more variable than student responses in other parts of the survey. A takeaway from this may be working to find ways to ensure the student experience is more consistently positive for all students.

Table 4

Satisfaction with School Psychology Program Experiences

Experiences	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Ambivalent (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very Dissatisfied (%)	Don't Know/NA (%)
Program professional development activities	33.3	57.1	4.8	4.8	0	0
Student engagement in DEI	28.6	28.6	23.8	14.3	4.8	0
Program social activities	19.0	57.1	9.5	9.5	0	4.8
Participating in early research opportunities	19.0	33.3	19.0	14.3	0	14.3
Research training before beginning your own research	19.0	9.5	28.6	23.8	4.8	23.8
Faculty addressing student concerns	14.3	9.5	28.6	38.1	9.5	0
Conducting research in collaboration with faculty	14.3	28.6	28.6	9.5	0	19.0
Faculty guidance in formulating a research topic	14.3	19.0	14.3	19.0	4.8	28.6
Faculty engagement in DEI	9.5	28.6	33.3	23.8	4.8	0

Overall, the majority of students (i.e., more than 50% of respondents) reported being satisfied or very satisfied with program professional development activities, student engagement in diversity, equity, and inclusion work, program social activities, and participation in early research opportunities. However, a substantial minority (i.e., more than 20% of respondents) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with research training before beginning their own research, how faculty addressed student concerns, faculty guidance in formulating a research topic, and faculty engagement in diversity, equity, and inclusion work.

Participants were additionally asked several questions regarding their perceptions of overall climate within the program, and how connected to and valued by students and faculty they feel. Several questions regarding student experiences of harassment and discrimination were also asked.

Most respondents (i.e., more than 50%) reported that they strongly agreed, agreed, or agreed somewhat with statements about feeling connected to and valued by other students, feeling welcome in the program, and feeling valued by faculty. However, a substantial minority (i.e., more than 20%) reported that they did not feel valued by faculty, and most respondents reported that they did not feel connected to other students outside the UConn School Psychology program.

Harassment and Discrimination

One very positive sign was that almost all respondents reported that they had not experienced harassment or discrimination from students or faculty, both within and outside of the school psychology program. **Unfortunately, however, one respondent did report having experienced harassment or discrimination from students and faculty, and this is one respondent too many!**

It is also important to be aware that despite efforts taken to keep responses anonymous, participants may not have felt comfortable reporting experiences of harassment or discrimination within the school psychology program or UConn in a program climate survey.

Data did show that over a quarter of respondents indicated that they do not feel comfortable reporting harassment or discrimination to UConn, and about 50% indicated concern about retaliation if they report harassment or discrimination. Further, only 30% of respondents thought that reporting harassment or discrimination would lead to it being addressed effectively; 20% disagreed that it was likely to be addressed effectively and the majority of respondents were not sure whether reporting would lead to an effective response to the harassment and discrimination.

Full results of these questions on student perceptions of the UConn School Psychology program climate and on harassment and discrimination can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5

Student Perceptions of School Psychology Program Climate

Perceptions	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Agree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Somewhat (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
Connected to other students in our program	23.8	47.6	19.0	9.5	0.0	0.0
Valued by other students	19.0	66.6	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Welcome in our program (like I belong here)	9.5	38.1	42.9	9.5	0.0	0.0
Valued by faculty	9.5	28.6	33.3	9.5	19.0	0.0
Connected to other students outside our program	9.5	9.5	28.6	0.0	38.1	14.3
Hostility towards me	0.0	0.0	4.8	14.3	33.3	47.6
Any form of harassment/discrimination from core faculty	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.8	23.8	71.4
Any form of harassment/discrimination from adjunct faculty	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	19.0	76.2
Any form of harassment/discrimination from other UConn faculty or staff	0.0	4.8	0.0	0.0	19.0	76.2
Any form of harassment/discrimination from students in the school psychology program	0.0	4.8	0.0	0.0	19.0	76.2
Any form of harassment/discrimination from students in other programs	0.0	4.8	0.0	4.8	14.3	76.2

Student & Faculty Dynamics

Students were asked specific questions regarding their relationship with their advisor specifically as well as their relationship with other faculty members. The below percentages were calculated by collapsing either Strongly Agree and Agree or Strongly Disagree and Disagree responses.

Most respondents (i.e., more than 50%) agreed that their advisor cares about their well-being, performs their role well, promotes their professional development, serves as their advocate when necessary, returns work promptly, and gives constructive feedback. However, as found in the data regarding program experience, reported student experiences with their advisor varied widely. About **14% of students reported that their advisor does not care about their well-being**, and similar numbers reported that their advisor does not serve as their advocate when necessary and does not provide helpful advice about career paths outside academia. Additionally, about **38% of respondents indicated that their advisor did not help them secure financial support**; this is most concerning in conjunction with the other results from this survey that found that financial concerns are a challenge for many students. Full results may be seen in Table 6 on the following page.

Table 6*Student Perceptions of Their Graduate Advisor*

Perceptions	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Agree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Somewhat (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Don't Know/NA (%)
Cares about my well-being.	42.9	33.3	0.0	9.5	14.3	0.0	0.0
Overall, performs the role well.	42.9	19.1	14.3	9.5	4.8	4.8	4.8
Promotes my professional development.	42.9	14.3	23.8	9.5	0.0	4.8	4.8
Serves as my advocate when necessary.	33.3	33.3	9.5	4.8	14.3	0.0	4.8
Returns my work promptly.	33.3	23.8	23.8	4.8	4.8	0.0	9.5
Helps me secure financial support for my graduate work.	33.3	14.3	9.5	23.9	4.8	9.5	4.8
Provides helpful advice about career paths outside academia.	33.3	9.5	9.5	9.5	14.3	9.5	14.3
Gives constructive feedback on my work.	28.6	28.6	14.3	9.5	4.8	4.8	9.5
Guides me through major academic milestones.	28.6	19.1	23.8	9.5	4.8	9.5	4.8
Provides helpful advice about career paths within academia.	28.6	9.5	19.1	9.5	9.5	4.8	19.1

Students were also asked about their communication with their advisor. While a third of participants stated that they meet or communicate with their advisor regarding their academic progress monthly, over **50% indicated that they meet or communicate with their advisor about their academic progress once a semester or less frequently.** Moreover, about 57% of students reported that they would like to meet with their advisor once a month or more frequently, while less than 10% indicated that they would like to meet with their advisor once a semester or less frequently. This suggests that **most students would like to meet or communicate with their advisor regarding their academic progress more frequently than they currently do.**

When asked about other faculty, most respondents (i.e., more than 50%) agreed that the other faculty give constructive feedback on their work, promote their professional development, perform the role well, return work promptly, and care about their well-being. However, almost 20% disagreed that other faculty provided helpful advice about career paths outside academia or guided them through academic milestones. Additionally, almost **50% of respondents reported that other faculty did not help them secure financial support.** Full results of student connection with non-advisor faculty may be seen in Table 7 on the following page.

Overall, most students reported that they have a positive or warm connection with two (38.1%) or three (28.6%) core faculty members. However, over a quarter of respondents indicated that they only felt a positive or warm connection with one (23.8%) or zero (4.8%) faculty members.

Table 7*Student Perceptions of Other Faculty*

Perceptions	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Agree Somewhat (%)	Disagree Somewhat (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Don't Know/NA (%)
Gives me constructive feedback on my work.	33.3	38.1	19.1	0.0	4.8	0.0	4.8
Promotes my professional development.	28.6	23.8	38.1	4.8	0.0	0.0	4.8
Overall, performs the role well.	23.8	38.1	28.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.5
Provides helpful advice about career paths outside academia.	23.8	9.5	23.8	4.8	14.3	4.8	19.1
Returns my work promptly.	19.1	52.4	19.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.5
Cares about my well-being.	19.1	38.1	33.3	4.8	4.8	0.0	0.0
Serves as my advocate when necessary.	19.1	19.1	23.8	4.8	9.5	0.0	23.8
Guides me through major academic milestones.	19.1	19.1	14.3	9.5	14.3	4.8	19.1
Provides helpful advice about career paths within academia.	14.3	9.5	19.1	14.3	9.5	4.8	28.6
Helps me secure financial support for my graduate work.	9.5	14.3	14.3	14.3	14.3	19.1	14.3

Qualitative Analysis

At the end of each section, we asked open-ended questions to gather additional information. In some cases, questions were very specific (e.g., “What is the most positive aspect of your relationship with your advisor?”), while in some cases questions were very broad (e.g., “Is there anything you would like to elaborate on for the above questions?”). A complete list of questions may be found in Appendix A.

This data was coded using an inductive coding process, working from the responses to identify common themes and ideas. Many themes appeared in responses to multiple different questions. Rather than reporting the data question by question, the themes that were identified across the data as a whole will be reported here. While some direct quotes will be pulled out and identified as such via the use of quotation marks, most reported results herein are themes identified in the responses. Bolded items are those that were most common, or very significant.

Program Strengths

“I have had a really good experience in this program...”

- **Faculty**
 - Are renowned and trail-blazing
 - Provide consistent high-quality teaching
 - Care and provide assistance, resources, and opportunities
 - Give good feedback
 - Are supportive, empathetic, knowledgeable, and solution-focused
 - Students enjoy the practitioner perspective from adjunct faculty who are currently practicing school psychologists

“She is a great cheerleader and boosts my self-confidence by telling me that I am doing well and that my skills are good!”

“Her feedback is SO helpful. She is very solution-focused and has helped me navigate many obstacles during my time in this program.”

- **Multiple professional opportunities**
 - Practicum
 - SASP professional development
 - APA accreditation
 - Cognate
 - Graduate Assistantships
 - Professional connections with school psychologists and researchers across the state and in academia

“There are two faculty members that I have a solid connection with, and I always feel like they care about me as a person as opposed to just a student/researcher.”

- **Sense of community**
 - Supportive and strong student community and good peer relationships
 - Faculty are seen as supportive, kind, caring, compassionate, and encouraging
 - Responses emphasized peer relationships over student/faculty relationships

“Program students are excellent, although most cohorts tend to keep to themselves. However, we all support and lift each other up, and it’s a supportive like-minded community that we can all grow and learn from.”

- **Research**
 - Rigorous and interesting research
 - Opportunities to learn from advisors
 - Direct involvement in research
- **Other**
 - Opportunities to learn, be involved, and develop skills
 - Excitement about the diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in the program

Program Barriers

- **Pandemic**
 - Impacted students personally and academically
 - Exacerbated concerns about our program
 - Made adjustment to graduate school adjustment difficult
 - **Respondents desired more empathy and personal support from faculty**
 - Respondents desired more adaptation and accommodations to course assignments, especially for practicum, given the changing context

“Practicum-based assignments for classes have been exceedingly difficult to complete... there was zero restructuring to course assignments that should’ve been restructured with respect to COVID-19 related challenges personally and environmentally.”

“Compassion in any given year is important, but especially in the pandemic. We all could’ve used a little more support.”

- **Heavy workload**
 - Perception of too many courses in first two years
 - Multiple assignments due at same time
 - **Working well over 70 hours a week**
 - Barrier to clinical and research opportunities
 - Contributor to burnout and desire to leave the program

“Suffering should not be the right of passage into academia. In our work as school psychologists specifically, we should be setting the tone for what is appropriate for balance, well-being, and an appropriate workload. Working 12-hour days, 7 days a week, during an entire semester leaves students burnt out before they enter a high burn out profession.”

- ***Difficulties silenced***

- Perception that students are not supposed to bring up academic, personal, or professional difficulties
- Perception that faculty are not open to discussions about challenges or are not responsive to concerns
- Mental health breaks emphasized but no opportunity given to take them

"We are not welcome to bring up difficulties with coursework or achieving academic milestones, nor to discuss personal concerns..."

"...there is a general sense in this program that we should just 'power through' and that we are not welcome to bring up difficulties achieving academic milestones, nor to discuss personal concerns..."

- ***Perceived lack of faculty support***

- Faculty only work with students because they have to
- Faculty have little interest in students beyond student assistance on projects; faculty research comes at the cost of development of individual students
- Faculty are not responsive to concerns or requests for support
- Faculty have difficulty supporting students due to their high number of responsibilities and commitments
- Some faculty not open to supporting non-advisees
- Challenging to meet with or receive an email response
- MA/6th year students are less valued and supported than PhD students
- Poor relationships, lacking a personal connection, with advisors
- Some respondents reported being nervous to talk to their advisors

"I really don't think there is a positive aspect of the relationship [with my advisor] because there is no relationship."

"...they [faculty] frequently come across as generally friendly but somewhat unapproachable or unhelpful if there is a difficulty."

"I do not feel that the faculty are very responsive to student concerns... This breaks trust between the faculty and students."

- **Funding concerns**

- Perception students were inadequately informed about funding prior to matriculation regarding number of graduate assistantships available and the ability to hold an assistantship while on internship
- Perception that the lack of graduate assistantships within the program (and corresponding need to find assistantships outside the program) leads to less time spent on research and other school psychology-related activities
- Many respondents reported experiencing financial difficulties; some reported wishing they had applied to more schools with better funding opportunities
- Funding more of a concern than expected when matriculating
- Desire for faculty to acknowledge the expense of the program and the challenge that places on students
- Desire for faculty to support those who take a full-time assistantship and treat them as serious students as well
- Belief that more financial support is necessary to diversify the student body

"If you have any monetary concerns, I would recommend going to another school."

"I feel like faculty sometimes don't take me seriously as a student because I spend 20 hours/week working on my GA, and have heard of advisors discouraging students from pursuing 20-hour positions... This, to me, directly opposes the program's goals of becoming more diverse."

"I wish our faculty trusted our professionalism, our time management abilities, as well as our ability to balance school-related responsibilities along with work - as we have been doing over these past few years... This is an incredible burden and will make internship year significantly more stressful."

Potential Changes

- ***Suggested faculty-student relationship improvements***
 - Meet more frequently with advisors
 - More concrete guidance on course sequences, career prep, and internships, as well as challenges faced
 - Build personal connection between students and advisors/other faculty
 - Create more time for students to interact formally and informally with faculty, such as at SASP or other social events
- ***Peers***
 - Desire for stronger relationships with students in other cohorts
 - Create opportunities for collaboration across cohorts on research and school psychology initiatives

"I think it would be important to create more time for faculty to connect with students."

"I would love more opportunities to get to know everyone (across cohorts) and collaborate on research or other SP initiatives..."

"It would be good to meet at least once per semester with an advisor."

- ***Communication Improvements***

- Share more about changes are being made within the program and why
- Ensure that information about the program is consistent across faculty members
- Reduce reliance on SASP to communicate important information such as deadlines, milestones, etc.
- Provide clarity around funding availability for prospective students
- Provide adjunct faculty information regarding previous and concurrent coursework and the structure of the program

"More communication would be helpful. I think we would benefit from additional information about what is happening and why, and I think students would like to feel more involved."

- ***Desired curriculum changes***

- Combine courses or restructure to reduce repetition; many respondents perceived that many classes (such as Single Subject and Applied Behavioral Analysis, or Academic Intervention and Academic Assessment) overlapped greatly
- Include more counseling classes
- Teach a greater variety of intellectual assessments
- Incorporate perspectives beyond behavioral
- Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion material more fully into every course

"Course content tends to overlap between classes which can be frustrating/confusing at times, especially in the second year."

"...combining those courses could greatly lighten the course load."

Appendix A: Full Survey

School Psychology Program

Before starting the program, I received accurate information about...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
the availability of funding for you in the fall and spring semesters.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
whether there is funding available in the summers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
the number of years funding is guaranteed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
whether I could hold a graduate assistantship while on internship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If you were to start your graduate career again, would you...

	Definitely not	Probably not	Ambivalent	Probably	Definitely
select UCONN again?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
select school psychology again?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
select the same graduate advisor?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please rate the following aspects of UCONN's school psychology program.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent	Don't know/Not applicable
Relationship between core faculty and graduate students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sense of community among graduate students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of graduate level teaching by core faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of graduate level teaching by adjunct faculty.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of the graduate curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of the academic advising and guidance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Amount of financial support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of financial support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To what extent have the following factors been an obstacle to your academic progress?

	Not an obstacle	Minor obstacle	Major obstacle	Don't know/Not applicable
Availability of funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Program structure or requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Course load	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graduate assistant responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental health issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social isolation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your self-confidence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feeling overwhelmed by all you have to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How satisfied have you been with each of the following experiences in the school psychology program?

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Ambivalent	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know/Not applicable
Faculty guidance in formulating a research topic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Research training before beginning your own research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conducting research in collaboration with faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in early research opportunities (e.g., lab rotations, research assistant positions, faculty-advised research projects/papers)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty addressing student concerns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Faculty
engagement in
DEI (Diversity,
Equity, and
Inclusion)

Student
engagement in
DEI (Diversity,
Equity, and
Inclusion)

Program social
activities for
students

Program
professional
development
activities for
students

Overall, during my time in the school psychology program at UConn, I have felt/experienced...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Disagree somewhat	Agree somewhat	Agree	Strongly agree
Welcome in our program (like I belong here).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Valued in our program by faculty.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Valued in our program by other students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connected to other students in our program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connected to other students outside our program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hostility towards me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any form of harassment/discrimination from core faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any form of harassment/discrimination from adjunct faculty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Any form of harassment/discrimination from other UConn faculty or staff

Any form of harassment/discrimination from students in the school psychology program

Any form of harassment/discrimination from students outside of the school psychology program

Any form of harassment/discrimination from my supervisor for my graduate assistantship

I know where to report harassment/discrimination to UConn.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

I feel comfortable reporting harassment/discrimination to UConn.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

I am not concerned about retaliation if I report harassment/discrimination to UConn.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

I believe that if I report harassment/discrimination to UConn it will be addressed effectively.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree nor Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

I considered leaving the program...

- Due to financial issues
- Due to personal/family circumstances
- Due to issues with my advisor/faculty
- Due to issues related to DEI (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion)
- Due to workload demands
- N/A (I have not considered leaving the program)
- Other: _____

Is there anything you would like to elaborate on from the above questions (teaching, sense of community, accuracy of information before coming to the program, obstacles you have faced, etc.)?

Your answer

Advising/Faculty Relationships

My advisor is...

- Dr. Bray
- Dr. Caemmerer
- Dr. Chafouleas
- Dr. La Salle
- Dr. Sanetti
- Prefer not to say

My graduate advisor...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/Not applicable
cares about my well-being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
serves as my advocate when necessary.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
helps me secure financial support for my graduate work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
gives me constructive feedback on my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
returns my work promptly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
promotes my professional development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

provides helpful advice about career paths within academia.

provides helpful advice about career paths outside academia.

guides me through major academic milestones (e.g., master's exam, internship applications, dissertation).

overall, performs the role well.

The faculty who are not my advisor...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/Not applicable
care about my well-being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
serve as my advocate when necessary.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
help me secure financial support for my graduate work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
give me constructive feedback on my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
return my work promptly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
promote my professional development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

provide helpful advice about career paths outside academia.

guide me through major academic milestones (e.g., master's exam, internship applications, dissertation).

overall, perform the role well.

How often do you meet or communicate with your advisor regarding your academic progress?

- Weekly
- Twice a month
- Monthly
- 2-3 times a semester
- Once a semester
- Once a year

How often would you ideally like to meet with your advisor regarding your academic progress?

- Weekly
- Twice a month
- Monthly
- 2-3 times a semester
- Once a semester
- Once a year

How many core faculty members do you feel a positive or warm connection to?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

What is the most positive aspect of your relationship with your advisor?

Your answer _____

What aspect of your relationship with your advisor could be improved the most?

Your answer _____

What is the most positive aspect of your relationship with the other faculty (non-advisor)?

Your answer _____

What aspect of your relationship with the other faculty (non-advisor) could be improved the most?

Your answer _____

Is there anything else you would like to add or comment on?

Your answer _____

Funding

How would you describe your current financial situation?

- Finances are not a problem
- Tight but doing fine
- Struggling financially

Which of the following (if any) have been/are concerns throughout graduate school? (Select all that apply)

- Food
- Housing
- Utilities
- Tuition
- Health Care
- Course Materials
- Technology
- Child/Elder Care
- Other: _____

Which of the following (if any) have you used for financial support throughout graduate school? (Select all that apply)

- External fellowship
- University-funded fellowship
- Graduate assistantships
- Need-based financial aid/loans
- Non need-based financial aid/loans
- On or off-campus (non-academic) employment
- Personal savings
- Support from parents or relatives
- Support from spouse or partner
- Travel grants
- Other: _____

Please describe your assistantship(s).


- I do not have an assistantship
- One full-time (20 hours) assistantship
- One half-time (10 hours) assistantship
- Two half-time (10 hours) assistantships
- Other: _____

About what percentage of your financial expenses (e.g., academic and cost of living) will be covered by your assistantship (GA, RA, or TA) this semester?

- None - I don't have an assistantship
- 1-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-99%
- 100% - all of it

Please estimate the amount of undergraduate and graduate educational debt you will have to repay after graduation.

	\$0	\$1-9,999	\$10,000-\$19,999	\$20,000-\$29,999	\$30,000-\$39,999	\$40,000+
Undergraduate educational debt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graduate educational debt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<  >

Please estimate how many professional conferences (local, national, and international) you have attended while in the program.

Your answer _____

For how many of these conferences did you receive additional funding for conference expenses such as registration, travel, and accommodations?

Your answer _____

From where did you receive additional conference funds? (Select all that apply)

The school psychology program

A research grant

A conference travel grant

Other: _____

Participating in conferences is affordable for me.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree Somewhat
- Agree Somewhat
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

I have avoided attending professional conferences because of the out-of-pocket expenses.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Disagree Somewhat
- Agree Somewhat
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Final Thoughts!

What year are you in the program?

- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4
- Internship year
- PhD entrant with Master's/Sixth-Year completed
- Prefer not to say

What do you like most about the UCONN school psychology program?

Your answer _____

What aspects of the UCONN school psychology program do you find problematic?

Your answer _____

What advice would you give a prospective student or your past self interviewing?

Your answer _____

What would you like faculty to know/change?

Your answer _____

What would you like other students to know/change?

Your answer _____

Is there anything else you would like us to know?

Your answer _____

Appendix B - Qualitative Questions

1. Is there anything you would like to elaborate on from the above questions (teaching, sense of community, accuracy of information before coming to the program, obstacles you have faced, etc.)?
2. What is the most positive aspect of your relationship with your advisor?
3. What aspect of your relationship with your advisor could be improved the most?
4. What is the most positive aspect of your relationship with the other faculty (non-advisor)?
5. What aspect of your relationship with the other faculty (non-advisor) could be improved the most?
6. Is there anything else you would like to add or comment on?
7. What do you like most about the UConn School Psychology program?
8. What aspects of the UConn School Psychology program do you find problematic?
9. What advice would you give a prospective student or your past self interviewing?
10. What would you like faculty to know/change?
11. What would you like other students to know/change?
12. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

Appendix C: Fast Facts & Figures



43%

of students had considered leaving our School Psychology program.



32%

of students felt valued by faculty.



47.6%

of students felt comfortable reporting harassment/discrimination to UConn (and 47.7% were concerned about retaliation).



70%

of students reported tuition and healthcare have been/are concerns.



71.4%

of students indicated the availability of financial support was fair or poor.



75%

of students reported that they have avoided attending professional conferences because of the out-of-pocket expenses.



12%

of students reported that food has been/is a concern.

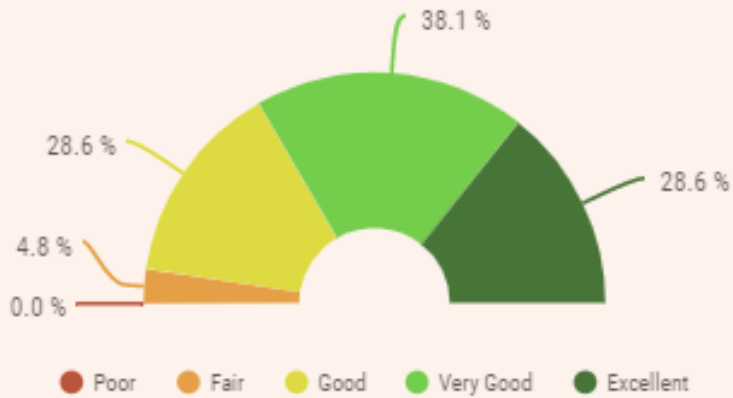


50%

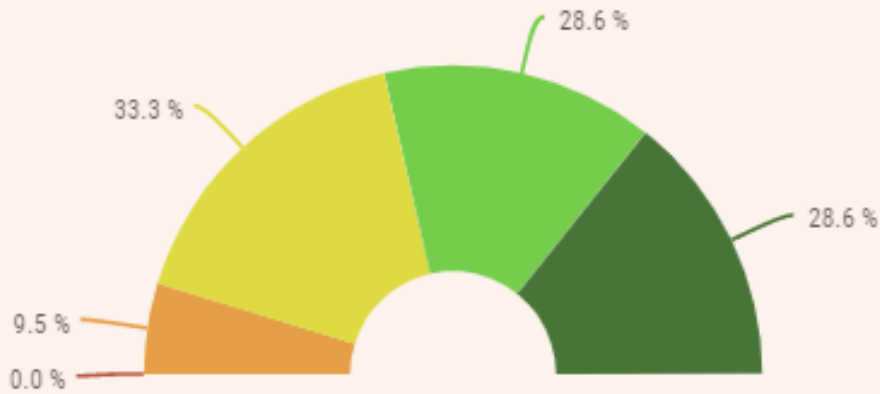
of students reported that housing has been/is a concern.

Academics

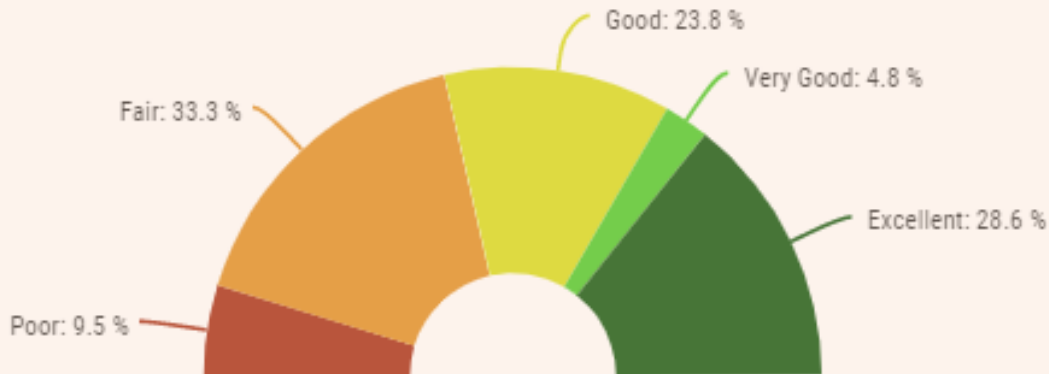
Quality of graduate level teaching by adjunct faculty.



Quality of the graduate curriculum

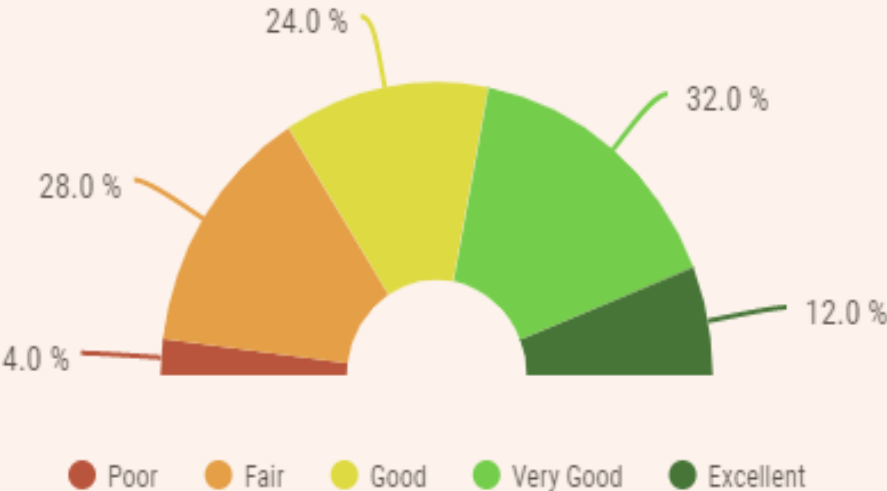


Quality of the academic advising and guidance

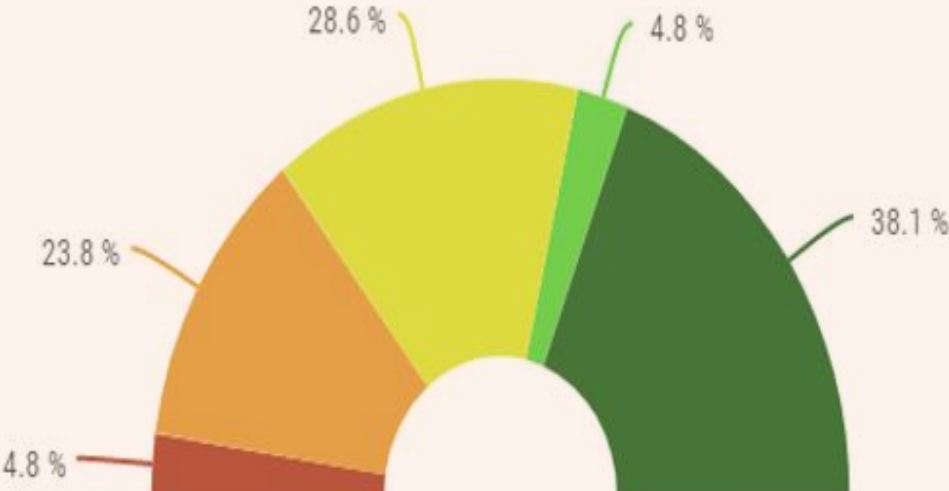


Overall Relations

Relationship between core faculty and graduate students



Sense of community among graduate students



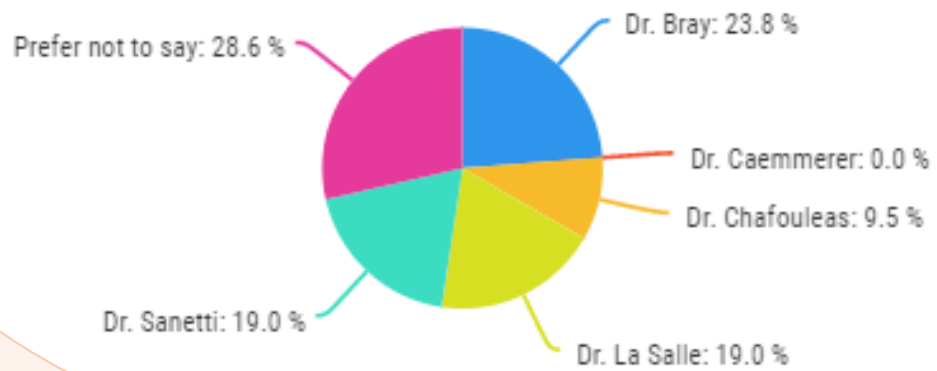
Faculty Relations



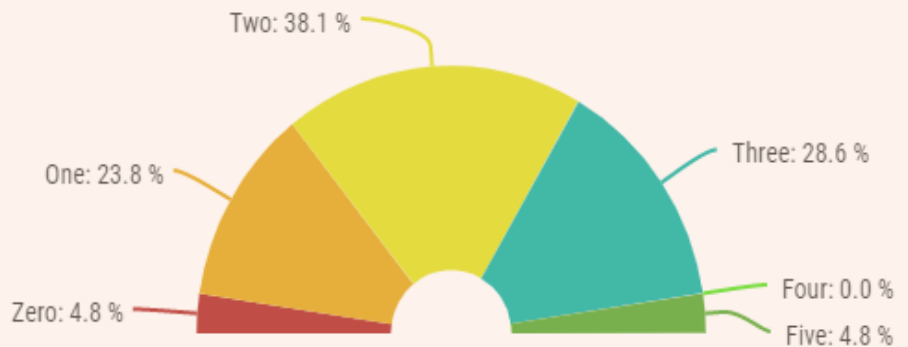
15%

of students indicated their advisor does not care about their well-being.

My advisor is...

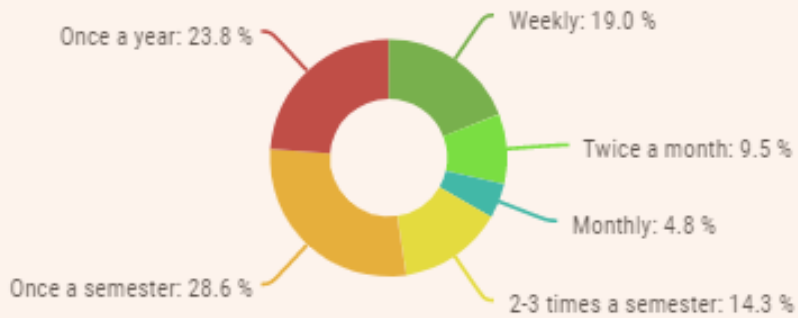


How many core faculty members do you feel a positive or warm connection to?



Advisor Relations

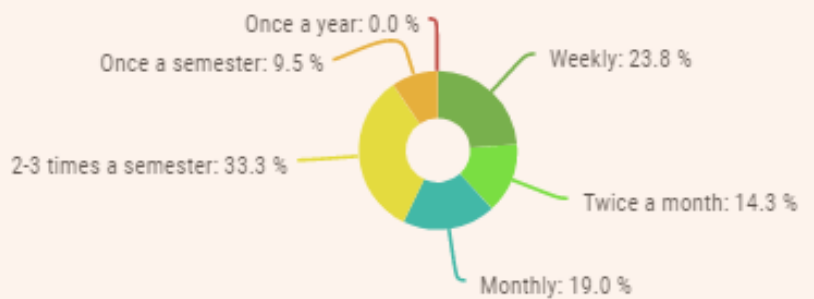
How often do you meet or communicate with your advisor regarding your academic progress?



90.5%

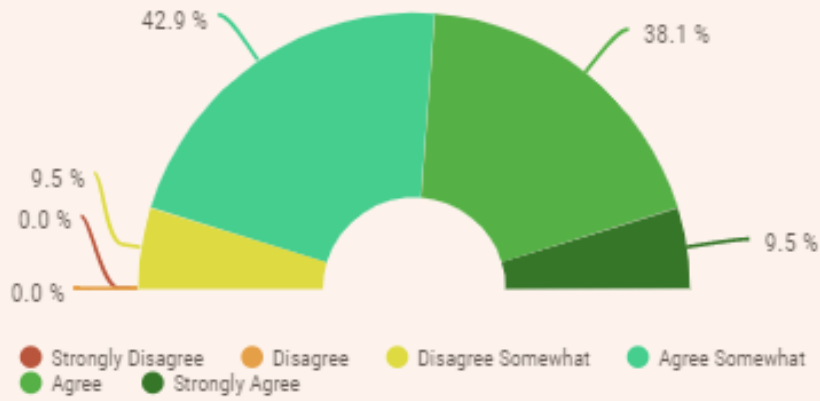
of students would like to meet more frequently with their advisor.

How often would you ideally like to meet with your advisor regarding your academic progress?

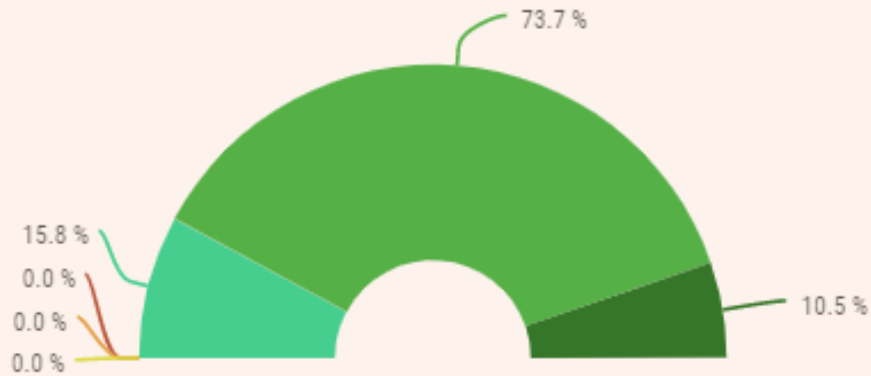


Program Climate

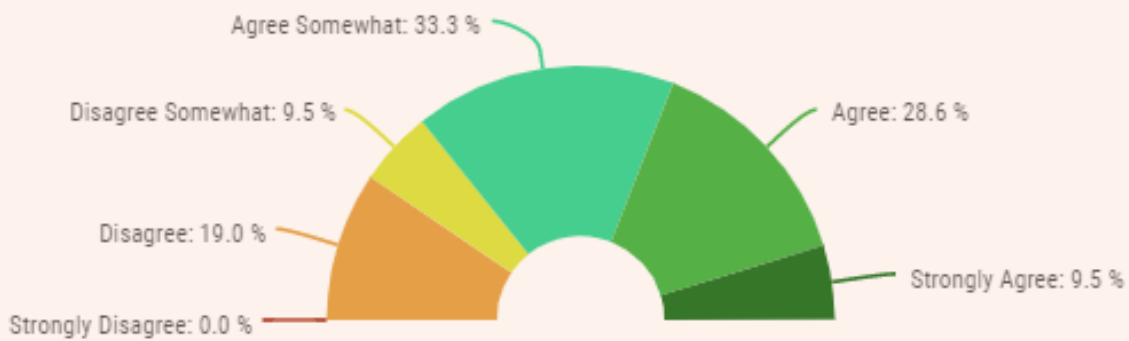
Welcome in our program (like I belong here).



Valued in our program by other students.

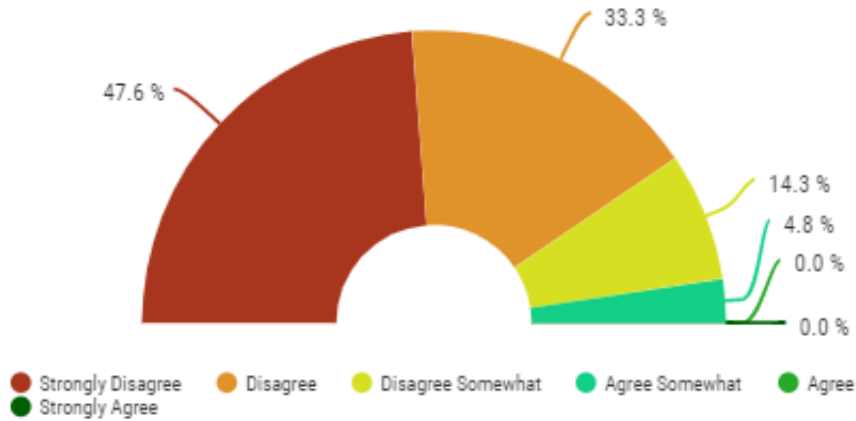


Valued in our program by faculty.

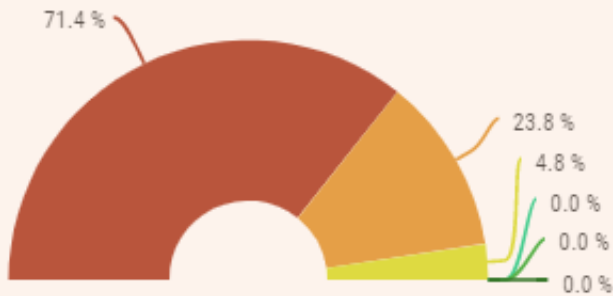


Harassment & Discrimination

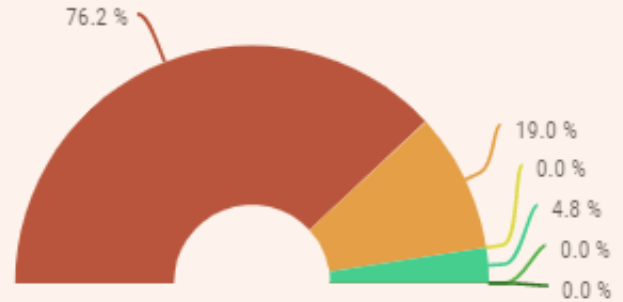
Hostility towards me



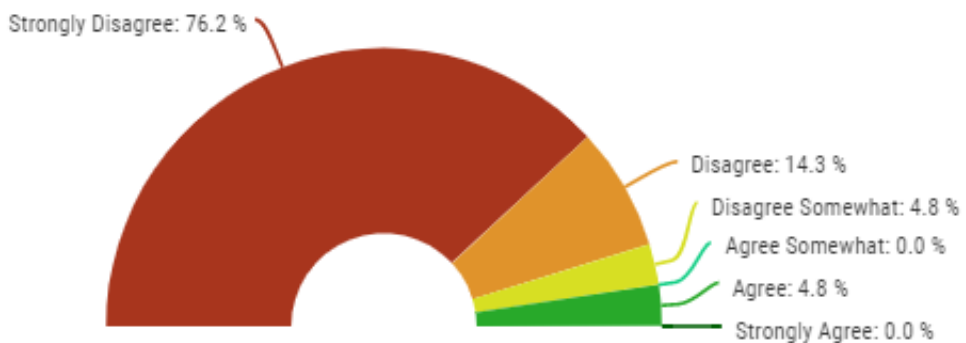
Any form of harassment/discrimination from core faculty



Any form of harassment/discrimination from adjunct faculty

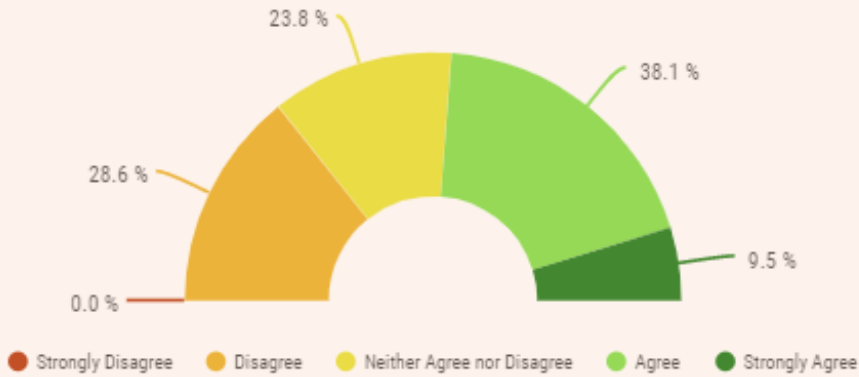


Any form of harassment/discrimination from my supervisor for my graduate assistantship

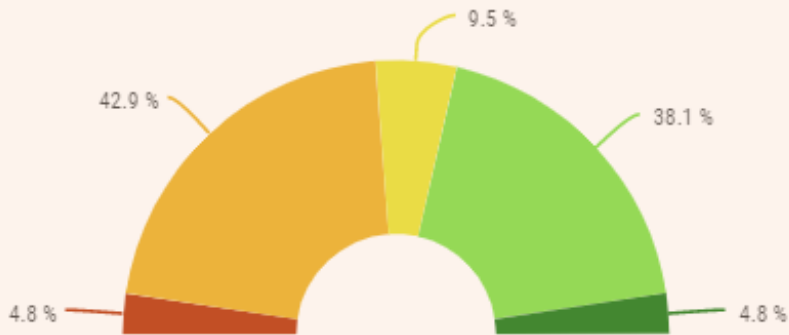


Reporting & Retaliation

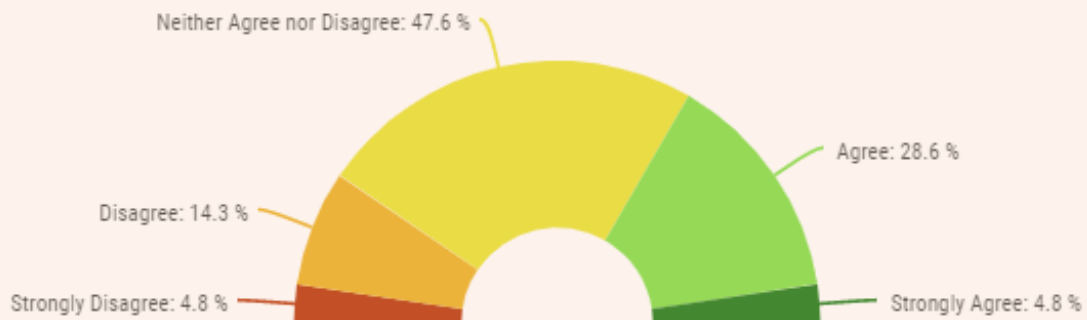
I feel comfortable reporting harassment/discrimination to UConn.



I am not concerned about retaliation if I report harassment/discrimination to UConn.



I believe that if I report harassment/discrimination to UConn it will be addressed effectively.





Acknowledgements

Thank you to all of the school psychology graduate students who took the time to complete the survey and the graduate students and faculty who continue to push our program to be better. We hope that the survey serves as a catalyst of change to foster improved communication, transparency, and action.

Please reach out with any questions or requests for clarification.

Sincerely,

Heather Kwolek & Michael Li



Images:

hard working by Gan Khoo Lay from the Noun Project

Mental Health by HeadsOfBirds from the Noun Project