2011 Doctoral Student Exit Survey

Highlights

The following highlights are based on data collected from the 2011 MIT Doctoral Student Exit Survey. The survey is open to all graduating doctoral students from Summer 2010 through Spring 2011. 460 graduating doctoral students responded to the survey, yielding a response rate of 77%. The survey asked graduating doctoral students about their experience at MIT, financial support and debt, activities while in graduate school, plans after graduation, and job search. A full report of overall results follows the highlights presented below.

MIT Experience

- The intellectual quality of the faculty was the most highly rated category of respondents’ MIT experience, with 69% saying it was excellent.
- 73% of respondents rated their overall MIT experience as very good or excellent.

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<th>Overall, how would you rate...</th>
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<td>(in descending order by sum of fair, good, very good, and excellent)</td>
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- The intellectual quality of the faculty?
- The intellectual quality of fellow graduate students?
- The overall program quality?
- Your academic experience at MIT?
- Your overall experience at MIT?
- The overall quality of graduate level teaching by faculty?
- Your student life experience at MIT?
- The relationship between faculty & graduate students?
- The quality of academic advising and guidance?

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<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
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• The largest primary field of doctoral study among respondents was Electrical, Electronics & Communications Engineering, listed by 16% of respondents.
• 98% of respondents report receiving feedback on their research during their graduate program at MIT.
• 82% of respondents worked on their dissertation for 4 years or less after completing coursework and exams.
• 90% of respondents considered their dissertation/thesis advisor as a mentor.

Demographics
• 70% of exiting doctoral students were male and 30% were female.
• The average age for both male and female respondents was 30.
• 60% of exiting doctoral students were U.S. citizens or permanent residents while 40% were international students.
• 48% of respondents reported being married or living in a marriage-like relationship.

Financial Support & Debt
• The most common source of financial support for respondents was a research assistantship, with 90% listing it as a source.
  • A research assistantship was also the largest source of financial support for respondents, with 52% of respondents listing it as their primary source of funding.
• 88% of respondents reported that they will have no debt directly related to their graduate education when they receive their doctoral degree.

Future Plans
• When asked about their postgraduate plans, 52% of respondents said that they intend to take a postdoctoral position.
• When asked about their job search, respondents reported receiving on average 2 offers for employment (including accepted offers).
• When asked about their job offer, respondents who intend to take a postdoctoral position reported on average a basic annual salary of $56,546; respondents who do not intend to pursue a postdoctoral position reported on average a basic annual salary of $101,171.
• When asked to describe the type organization where they will be working after graduating from MIT, the two largest types were “Industry or business (for profit)” and “US 4-year college or university other than medical school” each being listed by 30% of respondents.