Spring 2011 Graduate Assistantship Selection Process Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

The Division of Student Affairs hosted 111 prospective and current graduate students on campus for the graduate assistant selection process. Interviews took place during two, day-long sessions with assistantship providers from Student Affairs units from the University of Georgia and two other campuses. Participants were given a feedback form and were asked to complete and return it to the registration desk at the end of their interview day. 62 applicants participated in the first interview session, and 46 of those individuals completed an evaluation. 49 participated in the second interview session, out of whom 38 completed an evaluation. The feedback form included seven Likert-type and three open ended questions intended to gather information on the following aspects of the selection process: the Student Affairs graduate assistantship website, email communication, and registration logistics. The Likert-type questions included a four point scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Information garnered from the questionnaire provided insight on the program’s effectiveness and organization, as well as the general experience of those who participated in the graduate assistant selection process.

Findings

Below are the results from the seven Likert-type questions. These results represent both sessions. A total number of 84 applicants completed the feedback form, resulting in a 76% response rate.

- 96.4% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that the process for applying for a graduate assistantship in the Division of Student Affairs was easy to navigate.
- 96.4% of participants strongly agreed or agreed the Student Affairs graduate assistantship website was easy to understand.
- 97.6% of participants strongly agreed or agreed the information provide on the Student Affairs graduate assistantship website was helpful.
- 95.2% of participants strongly agreed or agreed the email communication regarding the assistantship process was clear.
- 96.4% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that email communication regarding the assistantship process was timely.
- 94% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that the registration table was easy to locate on the interview day.
- 100% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that the schedule provided at registration was easy to follow.
Below is a summary of the comments from the open-ended statements.

- Participants highlighted the hospitable environment that was created by faculty, staff, and current students.
- Participants expressed that the process was organized and straightforward.
- Several participants noted that communication needed improvement, specifically regarding schedules. Five people mentioned a need for better communication prior to coming onto campus. For example, one person stated, “I feel like there could have been better communication about the schedule before the weekend. I was not sure if my host was willing to host me Saturday night, or if it would be acceptable for me to leave before 5pm on Monday.”
- Several participants stated a desire to receive schedules further in advance for flight plans and other preparatory purposes.

**Limitations**

The reader should consider three limitations when looking at the findings from this assessment project. First, the Graduate Assistantship Selection Feedback Form was attached to another form that asked for personally identifiable information from participants. It is possible that applicants did not feel comfortable giving impartial feedback due a lack of anonymity. As a second limitation, it may have been difficult for applicants to conceptually distinguish between the academic and graduate selection processes. Applicants may have considered their experiences with the academic selection process in their responses on the feedback form. Thirdly, there were two groups that participated in this process: those affiliated with the College Student Affairs Administration (CSAA) program and those who were not. Those affiliated with the CSAA program completed the feedback form at a higher rate than the latter. Thus, it is important to maintain caution in generalizing these results for all students.