

GSG42-R11

A Resolution Asking for Data Collection for Students who Leave Early

Summary: This resolution calls on the Graduate School to collect data on graduate students who leave the university without their indeed degree.

WHEREAS, a reported 50% of doctoral students leave before completing their Ph.D.¹; and

WHEREAS, it is not known how many of these students left their program for systematic issues that caused them to fail compared to those “mastering out”²; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 12% of graduate students enrolled in master’s programs do not complete their master’s³; and

WHEREAS, the Graduate School works to improve graduate student success through several tools including gradSERU (graduate student experience in a research university), a survey done every other year collecting data on a wide variety of the graduate student experience⁴; and

WHEREAS, failing to survey students who did not finish their program creates survivor bias and does not collect the reasons that students do not complete their degree; and

WHEREAS, as long as this gap exists about how many graduate students do not complete their program and why they did not complete there can be nothing done to help more students succeed in their programs.

THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED THAT, the Graduate Student Government calls on the Graduate School to collect data on how many and the reasons graduate students fail to complete their intended degree.

¹ Flaherty, Colleen. (August 5, 2019). “Mastering Out”. *Inside Higher Ed*. Accessed on January 13, 2022. [Why 'mastering out' of a Ph.D. program might really be 'mastering in'](https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/08/05/mastering-out-phd-program-might-really-be-mastering-in) ([insidehighered.com](https://www.insidehighered.com))

² Ibid

³ Rotem, Yair, & Shustak. (July 31, 2022) “Dropping out of master’s degrees: objective predictors and subjective reasons” *Higher Education Research and Development*. 40.5. (1070-1084).

<https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2020.1799951>

⁴ (October 6, 2021). “gradSERU Results are Now Available”. [gradSERU Results Are Now Available | The University of Maryland Graduate School \(umd.edu\)](https://www.gradseru.org/gradseru-results-are-now-available)

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Date and Time of Submission: January 14th, 2023, 1:00pm

Date of Presentation: January 18th, 2023 (Rules); January 20th, 2023 (Assembly)

Action(s) Taken:

Decision of GSG President

Signature of GSG President

Date