



Building a SERU Graduate Student Survey

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Challenges Faced by Graduate Education in the U.S.

- **Ph.D. Attrition**
 - 6.6% leave in their first year
 - 30.6% leave without a degree by year ten
- **Ph.D. Time to Degree**
 - 56.6% complete their degree within ten years
 - 7.7 years – the national median time to degree in 2008
- **International Competition**
 - 33,000 - S&E doctoral degrees awarded in the U.S.
 - 28,000 - S&E doctoral degrees awarded in China
 - 15,000 - S&E doctoral degrees awarded in Russia
 - 11,000 – S&E doctoral degrees awarded in Germany

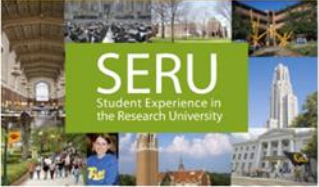
Note: data on doctoral degrees are presented for 2007-2008

Source: Council of Graduate Schools (2008), National Science Foundation (2009, 2012)



Survey Rationale

A survey can provide vital information about graduate/professional student experiences **while enrolled** that may help improve graduate education outcomes (i.e., increased graduation rates, faster time to degree, and help students find successful careers.)



The Need for the New Graduate Student Survey

- **Existing Surveys**
 - External **exit** surveys: Survey of Earned Doctorates & Survey of Doctorate Recipients (NSF)
 - Institutional **exit** surveys: encouraged to use Graduate Education Exit Survey (AAUDE) core as a component
 - Locally developed institutional student experience surveys: (UC-Berkeley, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Michigan, Rutgers)
- **Benefits of the New Survey**
 - a joint effort between AAU and SER-I
 - the survey will focus on graduate student experiences while enrolled in school
 - the survey will provide data for cross-institutional and international comparisons



SERU Graduate Student Survey

- Graduate: term used in the broadest sense
 - Master's, Ph.D., and 1st Professional
- December 2012 – first draft developed by SERU Co-PI Gregg Thomson
- Joint partnership: current draft is a merging of University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and Center for Studies in Higher Education, UC Berkeley efforts



Sources: Existing Surveys

- Extensive review of existing surveys
 - Examples
 - External Surveys:
 - Graduate Education Exit Survey -- Association of American Universities Data Exchange (AAUDE)
 - Survey of Doctorate Recipients -- National Science Foundation (NSF) & National Institutes of Health (NIH)
 - Survey of Earned Doctorates -- National Science Foundation (NSF)
 - Institutional Surveys:
 - University of Minnesota Doctoral Graduates Exit Survey (UMN)
 - Duke/MIT Graduate Student Survey (Duke University & MIT)
 - Graduate School Climate Survey – University of Texas at Austin



Sources: Carousel Brainstorming Session at UMN

Areas of Interest in Graduate & Professional Student Experiences Identified during the Brainstorming Session:



Academic, teaching, research, and professional development opportunities



Advising



Finances



Challenges and barriers



Sources: Carousel

Brainstorming Session at UMN



Community



Why are you here?



Support



Outcomes



Health & well-being



Expectation fulfillment



Other (ad hoc topics)

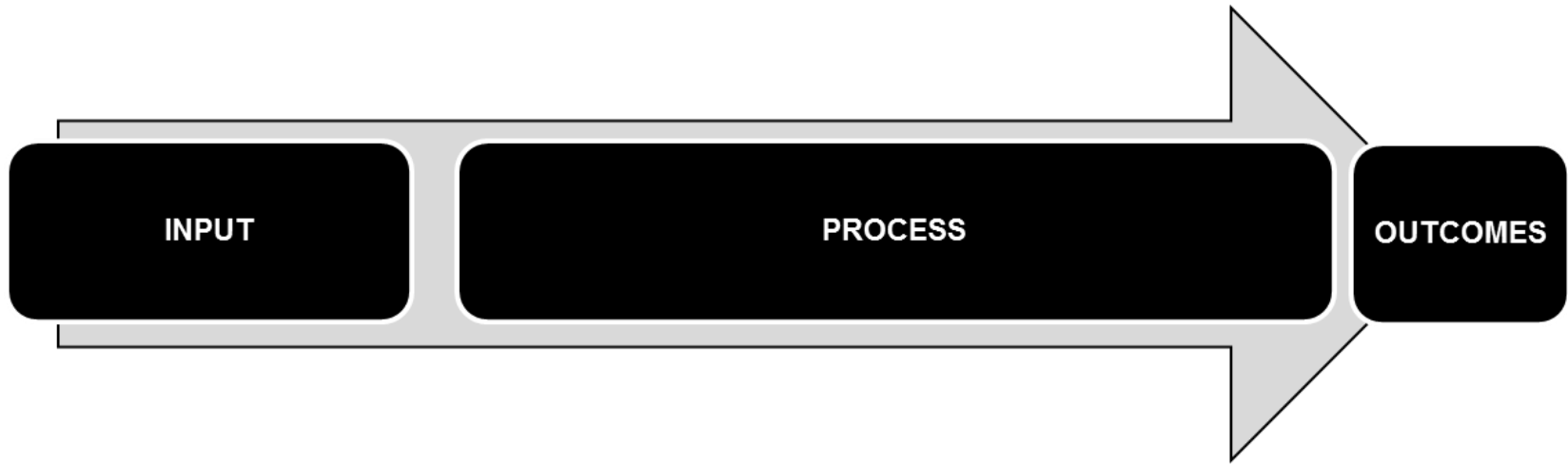


Sources: Review of Current Research Literature on Student Experience

- Tinto's theory of graduate persistence (1993)
- Astin's model of student development in higher education (1970)
- Research literature that identifies the key individual-and institution-related factors that impact on student success (degree completion & time to degree) in graduate school



SERU Graduate Survey Conceptual Framework



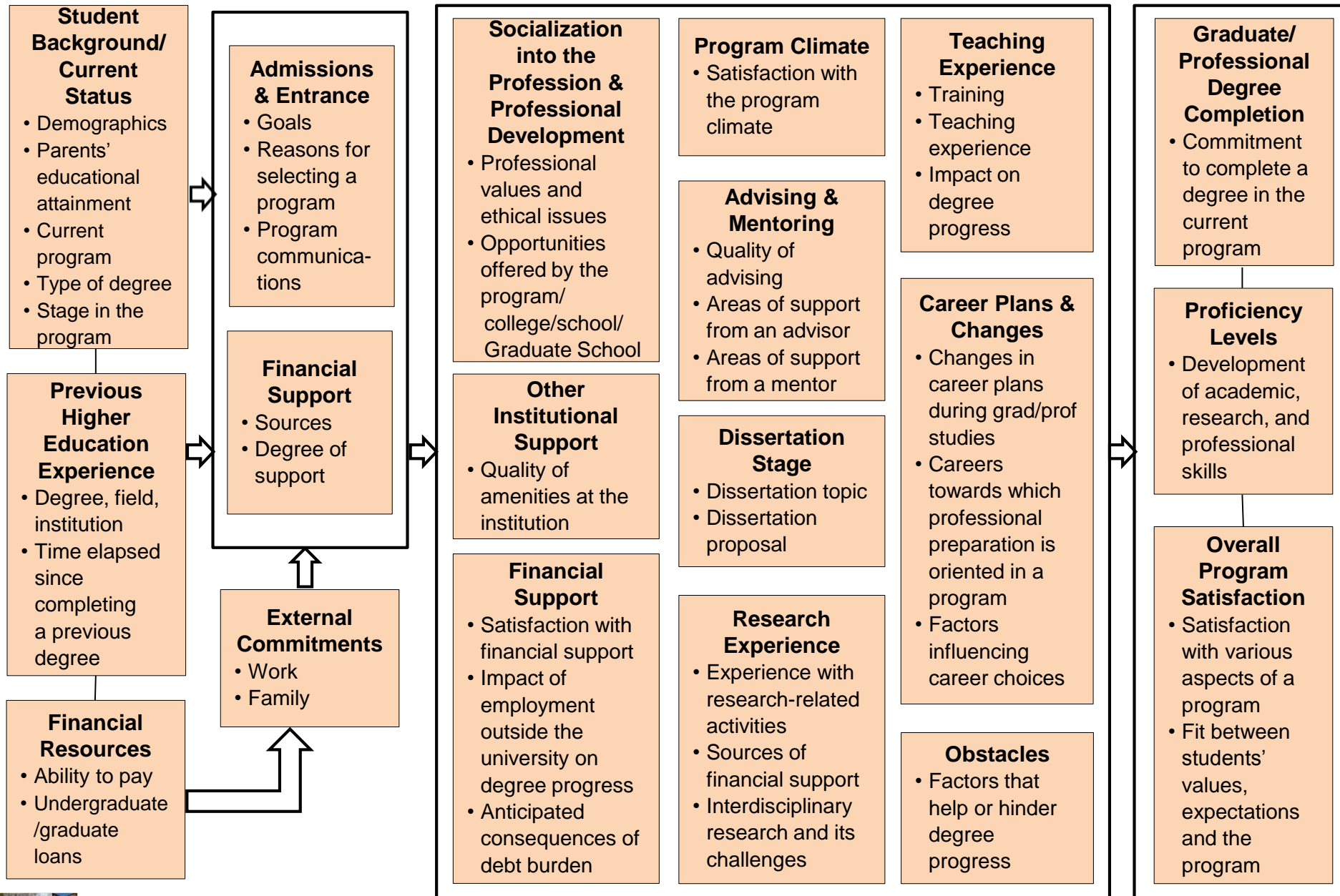
Conceptual framework: provides a basis/blue-print for survey development; mapping of final items to each domain will provide an item rationale document and a useful guide for conducting research with the survey in the future.

Attributes

Entry Orientations

Student Experience

Outcomes



Note. Derived from Tinto (1993) and Astin (1970).





Questions

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