

"TAKE IT FROM ME"

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RECENT ALUMNI
REFLECTING ON THEIR UNDERGRADUATE
EXPERIENCE

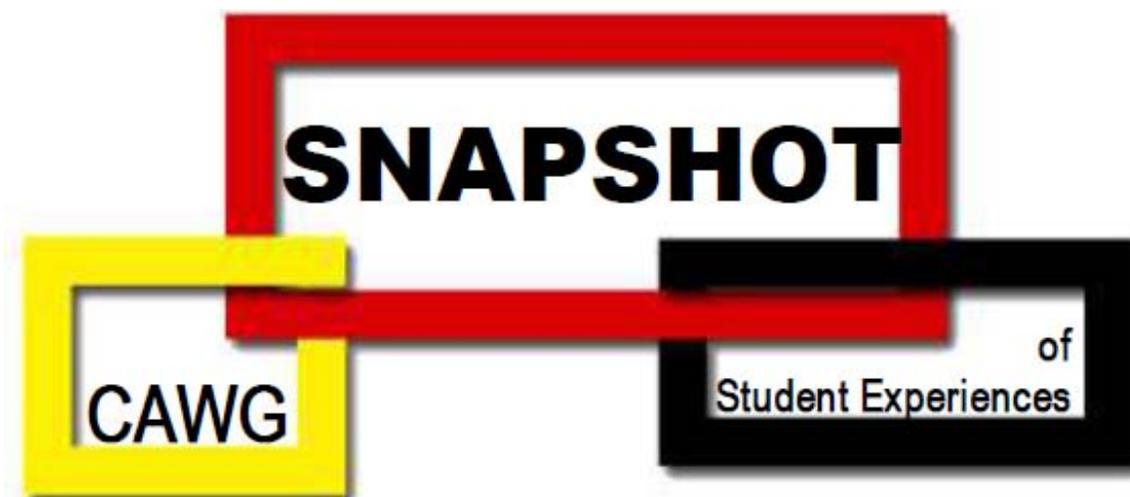
ADVISING CONFERENCE

AUGUST 14, 2012

INTRODUCTION

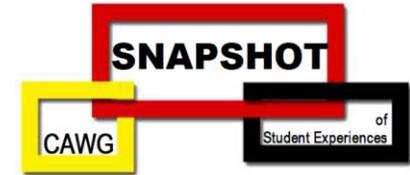
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PRESENTATION AGENDA

Alumni Survey

2011 Alumni Survey

- **Sample**
- **Items**
- **Results**
- **Analysis**

Discussion

ALUMNI SURVEY BACKGROUND

- **Conducted every 3 years**
- **Online**
- **Administered to all UMD Bachelors' recipients 1 year after graduation**
- **Mandated by MHEC**
- **Additional items added by CAWG**

ALUMNI SURVEY 2011

Response rate

- **14% of all undergraduate degree earners FY'10 (n=837)**
- **73% First-time freshman**
- **27% Transfer students**

Comparability to 2010 grad population

- **Female and white students over-represented**
- **Male and Asian students under-represented**

2011 ALUMNI SURVEY CONTENT

Quantitative items

MHEC

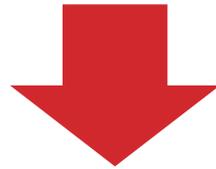
CAWG

Qualitative items

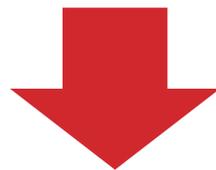
CAWG

ANALYSIS

Larger themes



Sub-themes



Reliability

RESULTS

Looking back at their undergraduate experience, responding alumni wished they had more opportunity to engage in...

- Mentoring
- Broad experiences
- Real-world skills
- Preparation for the future

ORGANIZATION OF RESULTS

Who wanted more opportunity

What type of experience

Why it is important to be engaged in experiences

How to engage in experiences

Challenges associated with each experience

MENTORING

64% wished they had more opportunity to establish a mentoring relationship with a UM faculty/staff member

WHAT IS MENTORING

“[...] really delving into my interests and commitments and helping me discover what direction would best suit me.”

WHY MENTORING

“I could have developed more of a rapport with the professors in my major. This could have really helped me in writing recommendations to grad school...”

HOW TO FIND A MENTOR

“As far as relationships with faculty, I could have taken initiative to meet with professors, go to more office hours, and participate more in class.”

CHALLENGES OF MENTORING

“I could have reached out to senior faculty members requesting their guidance and support. That being said, I wasn't sure if that was their role.”

BROAD EXPERIENCES

Recent alumni wished they had more opportunity to:

- 54%** Increase academic knowledge outside their major
- 46%** Gain an understanding of global issues
- 31%** Understand diverse perspectives
- 28%** Work with others who are different than you

WHAT ARE BROAD EXPERIENCES

“...expose myself to other areas of interest.”

“...nothing compares to experiencing another culture for an extended period of time.”

HOW TO BROADEN YOUR EXPERIENCE

“I would have taken more classes outside of my major and looked for job experience/ research experience earlier than I did.”

“I wish I had taken advantage of a study abroad semester. The courses that UMD offers are fantastic, but nothing compares to experiencing another culture for an extended period of time.”

CHALLENGES TO BROADENING YOUR EXPERIENCE

“I could have gotten involved in research as I became more familiar with the faculty and school. But as time went on and classes became more intense, time was limited with working to pay for college and still join clubs and activities.”

REAL-WORLD SKILLS

Recent alumni wished they had more opportunity to:

- 48%** Develop your ability to speak effectively
- 46%** Develop your leadership skills
- 41%** Develop your ability to write effectively
- 40%** Apply what you have learned to other situations
- 40%** Present a persuasive argument
- 34%** Revise your thinking based on new information

WHAT ARE REAL-WORLD SKILLS

“I could have focused [...] more on fine tuning my writing skills.”

“I wish I had taken more opportunities to practice public speaking.”

HOW TO BUILD REAL-WORLD SKILLS

“I wish that I had picked one of the student organizations to become more involved in and perhaps worked towards a leadership position in that organization so that I could have had more practice with that sort of thing going into the work place.”

“I could have gone to the Writing Center to develop my writing skills

“I could have taken a speech course as an elective on my own time.”

CHALLENGES TO REAL-WORLD SKILL BUILDING

“I was not aware of any options available in [my] program, and familiarizing oneself with the classes offered through [another] department seemed a little daunting.”

PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE

Recent alumni wished they had more opportunity to:

- 59%** Prepare for your current educational or professional position
- 34%** Develop a sense of professional ethics

WHAT IS PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

“If I had taken the time to do an internship or work part-time at a job that was related, I might have a job related to my major now...”

WHY PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

“I, for example, never felt able to do an internship and did not have a strong faculty advisor relationship because I did not realize how [this] would influence grad school possibility for me.”

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

“I could have been more proactive in seeking these opportunities out and taking my future into my own hands and not trusting that the education I received, albeit a good one, was enough....”

“I would have tried looking for an internship with a sense of urgency early in college...”

“[I could have] taken more time to meet with [someone from] the career center and interact more with my professors.”

CHALLENGES TO PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

“I could have probably searched for more opportunities in research labs but I felt like I didn't know where to look.”

“Having a full-time job while being a full-time student in order to afford school in the first place resulted in a myopia about my college experience that I would not have time for internships, clubs, activities and other interests that would have helped me in finding a major-related career or put me on the path toward grad school.”

THE BIG PICTURE

“It's important to be more forward thinking as a student. Most students are thinking in the short term, but many of these opportunities are going to benefit them for the rest of their lives. I should have thought more Big-Picture in choosing classes, extracurricular activities, or taking advantage of activities and events and networking that I never did.”

ALUMNI SURVEY STUDENT SNAPSHOT

Accessible

- List of important experiences
- Resource for advising conversations

Organized by theme

Download PDF at www.umd.edu/cawg

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- **To what extent have these themes come up in conversations with students?**
- **What prompts advisees to raise these topics?**
- **How can we combat challenges students perceive and experience?**
- **How can insight from alumni help you to advise current students?**

STAY TUNED FOR.....

Quantitative snapshot and forum for a more comprehensive analysis of 2011 Alumni reflections

Roundtable Discussion with Recent Alumni for Current Undergraduates



CAMPUS
ASSESSMENT
WORKING GROUP

The 2011 Alumni Survey Snapshots are
available electronically at:

www.umd.edu/cawg