



Status of the Graduate Program

a report to the Faculty



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Graduate Coordinator
Fall Quarter 2007

The Graduate Program is critical to the educational efforts of the faculty, and hopefully you will find this brief report informative. Previous reports were issued in Fall 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006. Redacted versions of all reports may be downloaded as pdf files from the graduate program web site (see below).

Enrollment

As of August 30, 2007, the program has 92 classified graduate students (list not available in web version). The number of student in the program reported by the University only includes students registered for units during Fall quarter. Not all graduate students enroll in classes (supervisory or traditional) every quarter. Some take formal leaves of absence, and many are adept at “stopping out” without losing their enrollment.

Enrollment in the graduate program, as measured by the number of students taking units in Fall Quarter, is strong (Fig. 1). Enrollment in Fall 2006 was 77 students, the highest number in the history of the program.

Over the past 15 years, enrollment has grown at an average of 5% per year, which yields a doubling time of 13.1 years. This growth rate can not be maintained, and must decline as the department reaches “carrying capacity” in terms of graduate students.

Admissions

The table below shows Admissions activity over the past 11 academic years. Data for 1995-96 are approximate because the database to track activity was not implemented until midway through the period. Beginning in 1998, the “Incomplete/No Action” category consists of applicants who were unable to find a sponsor.

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Admitted Classified	~14	11	16	35	26	23	26	31	24	37	22	21
Admitted Conditional	~6	6	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Denied	~4	9	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Incomplete/ No Action	~26	25	15	15	11	14	13	13	9	25	6	20
Total	~50	51	48	51	38	37	39	44	33	62	28	41

The total number of applications for 2004-05 is unusually high, and likely biased by the fact that the University did not accept graduate applications for some quarters in 2003-04, and closed early in other quarters. These closures may have resulted in some students being forced to delay their application until the 2004-05 academic year. Total applications for 2005-06 returned to a more normal number, but increased in 2006-07.

Information Requests

When requests for information are received, students are referred to the grad program web site (below), which has extensive information on application processes, policies, and procedures. The department is listed at the “gradschools.com” web site:

<http://schools.gradschools.com/graduate-schools/CA-Polytech-Pomona.html>

If students ask you about the graduate program, please direct them to the web site (below).

World Wide Web Site (<http://www.csupomona.edu/~biology/gradprog/>)

The Graduate Program web site serves as a recruitment medium and for the dissemination of information in an efficient manner. The site contains substantial information for current students, including thesis and thesis defense. A major revision to the site was completed in Summer 2006. The revision brought the site into compliance with university web site formats and styles. Comments on the web site would be appreciated. If students are asking you about our graduate program, please direct them to the web site.

Forms

Forms used in the graduate program are now available online. Go to the grad program web site (url above), and click Forms in the left navigation panel. This includes the Program form (the “GS-101” or “Contract”), as well as the forms necessary to report defense and acceptance of thesis.

Faculty Membership on Thesis Committees

Appended is a list of thesis committee membership for each faculty member (not available on web version). Students for whom the faculty member is the major professor are indicated. *Please inform the graduate coordinator of changes that should be made to this information.*

Graduate Faculty Information

Please visit the graduate program web site: <http://www.csupomona.edu/~biology/gradprog/> and click “Faculty” to view the listing of graduate faculty with research interests. This web page is the principal method of informing both graduate and undergraduate students about faculty research. *Please inform the Graduate Coordinator of any changes to your information.* If you have a personal web page that is not linked from the graduate page, please send your URL to the graduate coordinator.

Graduate Student Research Funds

In the 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-01, 2001-02, 2002-03, 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06, and 2006-07 years, the department was able to allocate funds to support graduate research. A total of \$51,323.13 has been awarded (attached list – not available on web version) over this time period. Availability of “graduate differential funds” allowed \$10,321.83 to be allocated in 2006-07, by far the largest amount since 1998. In fact, of all the research funds awarded in the past nine years, over 20% were awarded this past academic year. If the graduate differential funds continue to be available to the program, it will allow this increased level of support to continue. Although the demand for funds will continue to exceed the supply, the ability to meet more of this need is a very positive outcome.

Graduates by Quarter and Year

A listing of graduates is appended (not available on web version). Information for this listing was obtained from the university BroncoDirect system, so dates reflect the quarter in which the degree was actually awarded. This may not be the quarter in which the student completed or defended the thesis.

Graduate Differential Funds

In 2006-2007, the University returned some Graduate Differential Funds to the College and the Department. The "Graduate Differential" is the difference between the amount paid by a graduate student and the amount paid by an undergraduate (about \$214 for full time students). The department was allocated \$15,986 for 2006-2007. The departmental plan for these funds was to spend about \$13,000 supporting graduate student research, about \$1,000 to hire a student web programmer to develop a site highlighting graduate research, and about \$2,000 to send a representative to a seminar on "How to Recruit Graduate Students."

As indicated above, \$10,321.83 was allocated to students for research purposes. An attempt was made to hire a web programmer, but there were no applicants. This effort will be repeated in the 2007-08 year. The seminar was attended (Moriarty), and will result in various changes to recruitment efforts, most notably a brochure advertising the program. Admissions and Outreach has hired a graduate recruiter, who has offered to help in the development of this brochure. The remaining funds (approximately \$3,000) are expected to roll over, and be available in the 2007-08 academic year.

The largest and most important impact of these funds is the increased amount of support for graduate student research. It is hoped that the University will continue to allocate these funds to the College and Department, which would allow truly meaningful support of the student research efforts.

Graduate Student Survey

The Long Range Planning Committee conducted a survey of graduate students in Spring 2007. 42 students responded to the 29 question survey, conducted on Blackboard to insure anonymity. Results of the survey are included with this report. Overall, 52% of the respondents rated the quality of the program as very good or excellent, and only three students indicated they would not enroll in the program due to their experience in the program if they could make their graduate school choice over again. The major complaint of the students continues to be lack of graduate level courses, particularly in the cell/molecular area. Addition of graduate courses can only be addressed by the Faculty.

Assessment Plan

An initial plan for assessment of the Graduate Program was distributed to the Faculty in Spring Quarter 2007. The 17-page plan is not included in this document, but an electronic copy (pdf, 93 KB) may be requested from the Graduate Coordinator (dj Moriarty@csupomona.edu).

Acknowledgment

I thank the faculty for their strong support of the Graduate Program. Faculty receive minimal credit for the WTU generated through graduate supervisory courses, and no credit for serving as major professors, or for service on thesis committees. I know you do this work because you recognize the value of a strong graduate program to our students (both graduate and undergraduate) and to our faculty. Thank you for your sacrifices. It is a privilege to work for you.

David J. Moriarty September 4, 2007

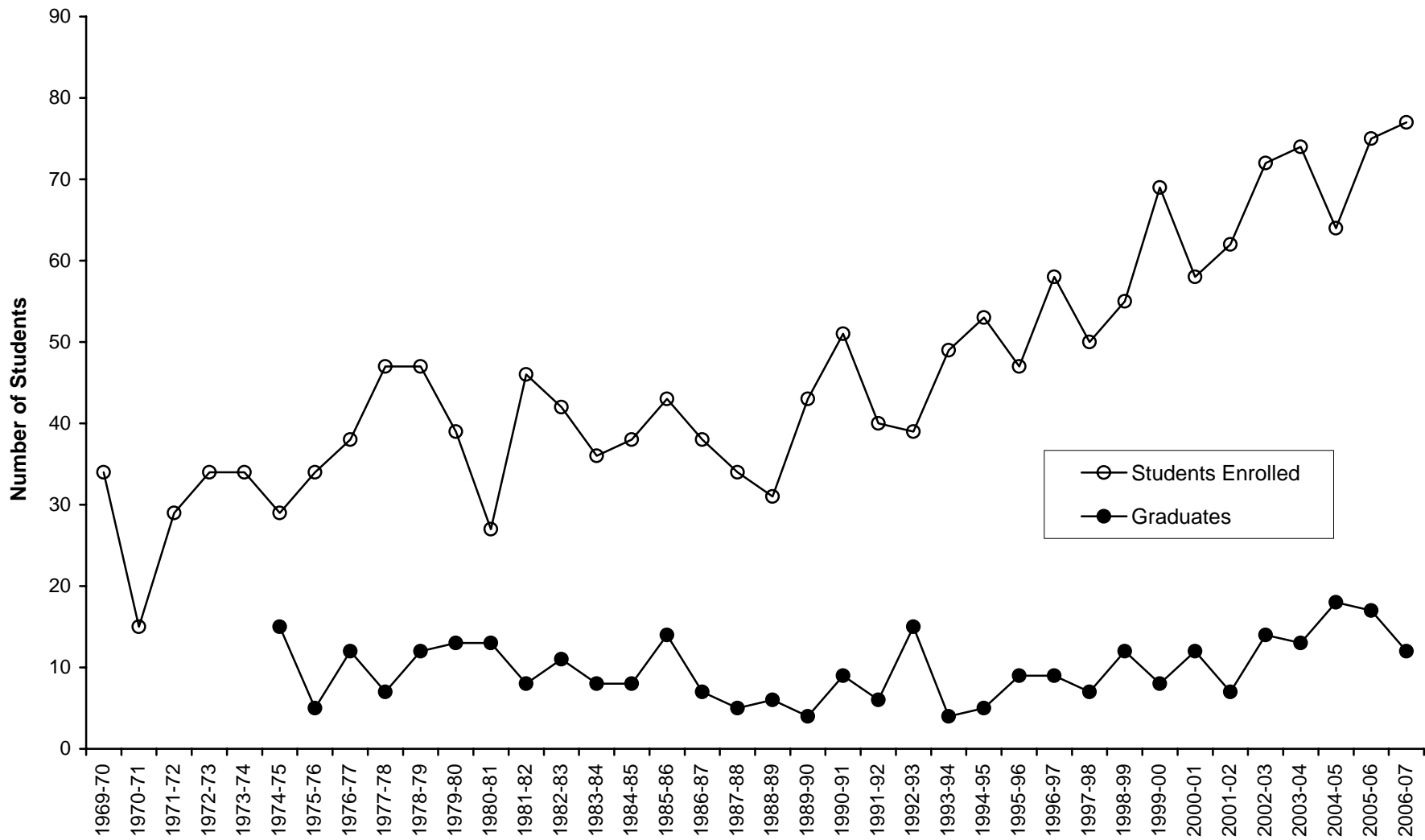


Fig. 1 Students enrolled in Fall Quarter 1969-1970 through 2006-2007, and students graduated from 1974-1975 through 2006-2007 (filled circles).

Survey of Graduate Students - Spring Quarter 2007		
Question 1		
What was the primary field of study for your Master's degree at Cal Poly?		
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%
Bioinformatics	1	2.4%
Cell/Molecular Biology	18	42.9%
Ecology/Environmental Science	5	11.9%
Immunology	4	9.5%
Microbiology	5	11.9%
Neurobiology	1	2.4%
Organismal Biology/Physiology	5	11.9%
Grand Total	42	
Question 2		
What is your best estimate of how many years TOTAL it will take to obtain your degree, from the time you started the program until you complete it?		
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%
Less than 2 years	6	14.3%
2-3 years	28	66.7%
4 years	2	4.8%
5 years	2	4.8%
More than 5 years	1	2.4%
Grand Total	42	
Question 3		
During your span in the graduate program were/are you:		
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%
Fluctuated between Full-time and Part-time	13	31.0%
Fluctuated between Part-time and leaves of absence	1	2.4%
Full-time enrolled	23	54.8%
Part-time enrolled	2	4.8%
Grand Total	42	

Question 4			
During your time in the graduate program, did you change faculty advisor?			
<Unanswered>	4	9.5%	
No	34	81.0%	
Yes	4	9.5%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 5			
What was your primary source of financial support during graduate school? If more than one, limit to choosing top 2 sources.			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Family support,Savings	1	2.4%	
Financial aid	1	2.4%	
Financial aid, Family support	2	4.8%	
Financial aid , Full-time work (off campus),Grant support	1	2.4%	
Financial aid , Part-time work (off campus)	1	2.4%	
Full-time work (off campus),Savings	1	2.4%	
Grant support, Family support	2	4.8%	
Grant support, Savings	1	2.4%	
Part-time work (off campus), Grant support	1	2.4%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA)	4	9.5%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Family support	4	9.5%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Financial aid	8	19.0%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Financial aid, Other	1	2.4%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Financial aid , Part-time work (on campus), Grant support, Savings , Other	1	2.4%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Grant support	1	2.4%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Part-time work (off campus)	4	9.5%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Part-time work (on campus)	2	4.8%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Part-time work (on campus), Part-time work (off campus)	1	2.4%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Part-time work (on campus), Part-time work (off campus), Family support, Savings	1	2.4%	
Teaching associate (TA/GA), Savings	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		

Please answer the following questions with regard to your satisfaction with the Biological Sciences graduate program.			
Question 6			
Satisfaction with career advising?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Extremely satisfied	2	4.8%	
Very satisfied	15	35.7%	
Somewhat satisfied	17	40.5%	
Somewhat dissatisfied	3	7.1%	
Extremely dissatisfied	2	4.8%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 7			
Satisfaction with preparation for career?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Extremely satisfied	5	11.9%	
Very satisfied	20	47.6%	
Somewhat satisfied	11	26.2%	
Somewhat dissatisfied	2	4.8%	
Extremely dissatisfied	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 8			
Satisfaction with the training you received in your own research during the program?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Extremely satisfied	18	42.9%	
Very satisfied	17	40.5%	
Somewhat satisfied	2	4.8%	
Somewhat dissatisfied	1	2.4%	
Extremely dissatisfied	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		

Question 9			
Satisfaction with course offerings?			
<Unanswered>	4	9.5%	
Extremely satisfied	0	0.0%	
Very satisfied	4	9.5%	
Somewhat satisfied	11	26.2%	
Somewhat dissatisfied	17	40.5%	
Extremely dissatisfied	6	14.3%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 10			
Satisfaction with course scheduling?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Extremely satisfied	1	2.4%	
Very satisfied	4	9.5%	
Somewhat dissatisfied	12	28.6%	
Somewhat satisfied	13	31.0%	
Extremely dissatisfied	9	21.4%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 11			
Your satisfaction with faculty enthusiasm?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Extremely satisfied	8	19.0%	
Very satisfied	17	40.5%	
Somewhat satisfied	11	26.2%	
Somewhat dissatisfied	3	7.1%	
Extremely dissatisfied	0	0.0%	
Grand Total	42		

Question 12			
Your satisfaction with faculty knowledge?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Extremely satisfied	13	31.0%	
Very satisfied	19	45.2%	
Somewhat satisfied	5	11.9%	
Somewhat dissatisfied	2	4.8%	
Extremely dissatisfied	0	0.0%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 13			
Satisfaction with development of critical thinking skills?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Extremely satisfied	5	11.9%	5
Very satisfied	22	52.4%	1
Somewhat satisfied	8	19.0%	4
Somewhat dissatisfied	3	7.1%	3
Extremely dissatisfied	1	2.4%	2
Grand Total	42		
Question 14			
Quality of class instruction?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Excellent	6	14.3%	
Very good	18	42.9%	
Good	13	31.0%	
Fair	2	4.8%	
Grand Total	42		

Question 15			
Quality of the physical teaching environment (lecture rooms) used in courses?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Very Good	13	31.0%	
Good	17	40.5%	
Fair	8	19.0%	
Poor	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 16			
The relationship between faculty and graduate students			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Excellent	9	21.4%	
Very Good	21	50.0%	
Good	7	16.7%	
Fair	1	2.4%	
Poor	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 17			
The expectations/requirements that I had to meet for my degree were clearly defined			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Strongly agree 	10	23.8%	
Somewhat agree 	26	61.9%	
Somewhat disagree 	3	7.1%	
Grand Total	42		

Question 18			
Have you received adequate faculty guidance in formulating a research topic?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Strongly agree 	22	52.4%	
Somewhat agree 	16	38.1%	
Strongly disagree 	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 19			
I was qualified to teach the classes I was assigned to teach as a teaching associate (TA/GA).			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Not applicable (I never taught) 	10	23.8%	
Strongly agree 	24	57.1%	
Somewhat agree 	4	9.5%	
Somewhat disagree 	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 20			
For those graduate students who have been teaching associates during their graduate careers at Cal Poly: Please indicate your level of preparation for teaching when you first started the Grad program.			
<Unanswered>	7	16.7%	
Not applicable	6	14.3%	
Very well prepared	11	26.2%	
Somewhat prepared	18	42.9%	
Grand Total	42		

Question 21			
For those graduate students who have been teaching associates during their graduate careers at Cal Poly: Please indicate your level of preparation for teaching now.			
<Unanswered>	7	16.7%	
Not applicable	7	16.7%	
Very well prepared	25	59.5%	
Somewhat prepared	3	7.1%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 22			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Employed in academic institution (public or private; K-12, college, univ, etc)	8	19.0%	
For-profit corporation/company	9	21.4%	
Further graduate schooling or professional school (med, dent, vet, etc)	13	31.0%	
Government agency or office	1	2.4%	
Non-profit corporation/organization	1	2.4%	
Still undecided	7	16.7%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 23			
In what field is your primary career goal at this time?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Don't know	1	2.4%	
Ecology/Environmental science	5	11.9%	
HS or Junior HS teacher	1	2.4%	
Junior College faculty	4	9.5%	
Non-science	1	2.4%	
Other, science-related	1	2.4%	
Pharmacy	1	2.4%	
Physician/Medical Doctor	6	14.3%	
Research (academia, biotech, pharma, etc)	18	42.9%	
Veterinary	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		

Question 24			
Why did you choose the Graduate Program in Biology at Cal Poly? Choose all that apply.			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Geographic location	1	2.4%	
Geographic location ,Met your research interests, Other	1	2.4%	
Geographic location ,Met your research interests,Profile/reputation of program ,Was your final viable option	1	2.4%	
Geographic location ,Profile/reputation of the program	1	2.4%	
Geographic location ,Was your final viable option	1	2.4%	
Geographic location ,Was your final viable option ,Other	1	2.4%	
Low cost	1	2.4%	
Low cost ,Geographic location	3	7.1%	
Low cost ,Geographic location ,Met your research interests	7	16.7%	
Low cost ,Geographic location ,Met your research interests,Other	2	4.8%	
Low cost ,Geographic location ,Met your research interests,Profile/reputation of the program	3	7.1%	
Low cost ,Geographic location ,Met your research interests,Profile/reputation of the program ,Other	1	2.4%	
Low cost ,Met your research interests	1	2.4%	
Low cost ,Met your research interests,Profile/reputation of the program ,Other	2	4.8%	
Low cost ,Was your final viable option	1	2.4%	
Met your research interests	4	9.5%	
Met your research interests,Other	1	2.4%	
Other	5	11.9%	
Profile/reputation of the program	1	2.4%	
Was your final viable option ,Other	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		

Question 25			
What was the primary factor for you enrolling in the grad program?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Expectations of a pay raise at my job	2	4.8%	
I wasn't sure of my career direction and felt this would be my best option for the time being	4	9.5%	
It's a stepping stone to a higher degree	9	21.4%	
Other	1	2.4%	
To advance my career options	12	28.6%	
To be more knowledgeable in my field	11	26.2%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 26			
Where did you earn your undergraduate degree?			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Cal Poly Pomona	23	54.8%	
Other California State University	1	2.4%	
UC System	7	16.7%	
Private institution in California	4	9.5%	
US institution outside of California	2	4.8%	
International Institution	2	4.8%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 27			
Graduate students in the Biology Department graduate with a Master's of Science degree (MS). If the Biology Department would have offered a Master's of Arts degree (MA) in Biology, in which only curriculum and library research were required to graduate, I would have:			
Opted for the MS 	27	64.3%	
Opted for the MA 	1	2.4%	
Slightly considered the MA 	7	16.7%	
Strongly considered the MA 	4	9.5%	
Grand Total	42		

Question 28			
Your overall rating of the quality of the program:			
<Unanswered>	3	7.1%	
Excellent	3	7.1%	
Very Good	19	45.2%	
Good	13	31.0%	
Fair	3	7.1%	
Poor	1	2.4%	
Grand Total	42		
Question 29			
If you could make your graduate school choice over again, would you still choose to enroll in the Biological Sciences Department at Cal Poly?			
Definitely would	17	40.5%	
Probably would	13	31.0%	
I would not, due to my overall experience in the graduate program.	3	7.1%	
I would not, for reasons having nothing to do with my experience in the graduate program.	1	2.4%	
Not sure	5	11.9%	
Grand Total	42		