

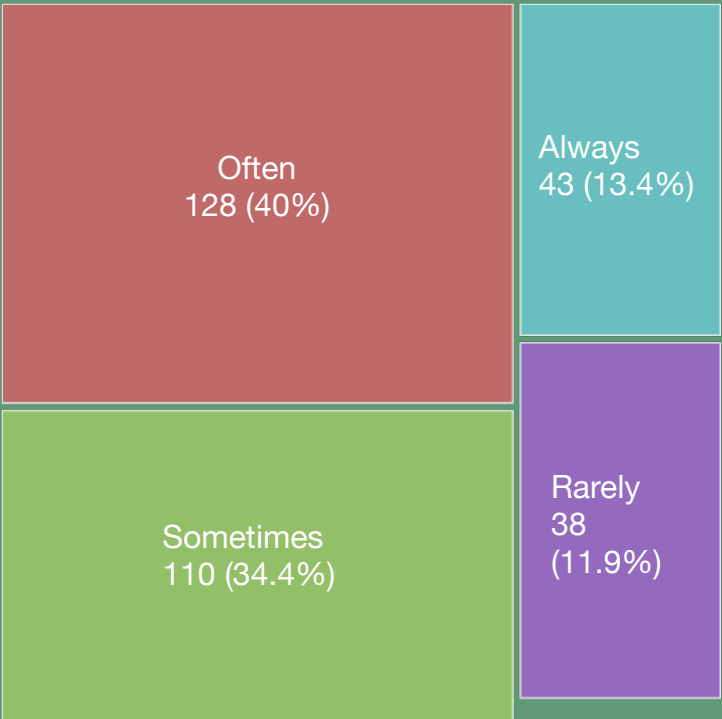
University of Wyoming Graduate Student Survey 2020

Information on survey participants: Survey completed between December 2019 and January 2020. 321 responses, including students from all colleges and distance students. Respondents are pursuing a variety of degrees, with the largest group being the 55.5% who identify as seeking a masters degree. Both international and domestic students are included. For further information, please contact graduate student Jessica Sutter at jsutter4@uwyo.edu or attend the Shepard Symposium session at 1:45PM, Thursday April 15th followed by a collaborative discussion from 2:15-3:15 focused on these results.

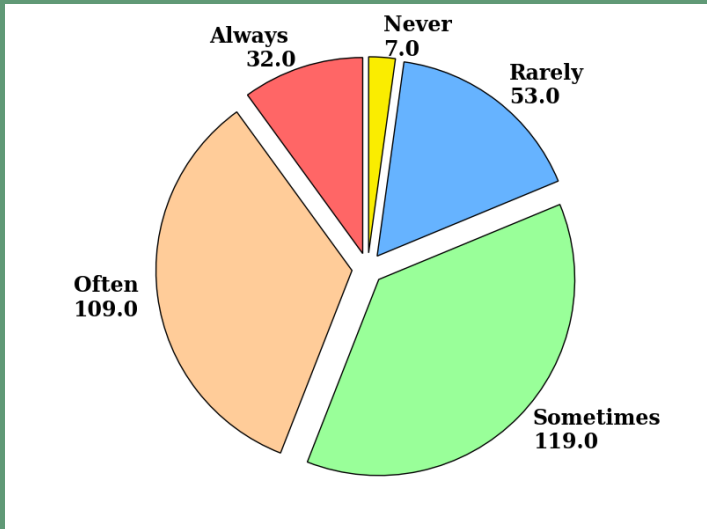
How often do you feel overwhelmed by your current workload?

(One additional respondent answered 'Never')

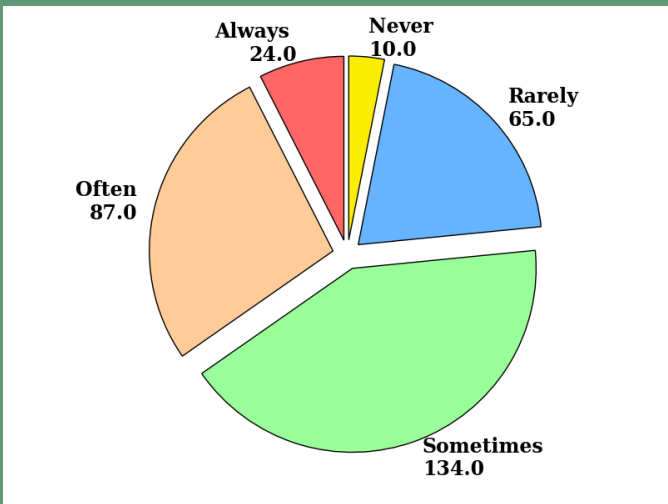
42.5% of respondents said they had seriously considered leaving their program before receiving their desired degree



How often does stress negatively impact your wellbeing?



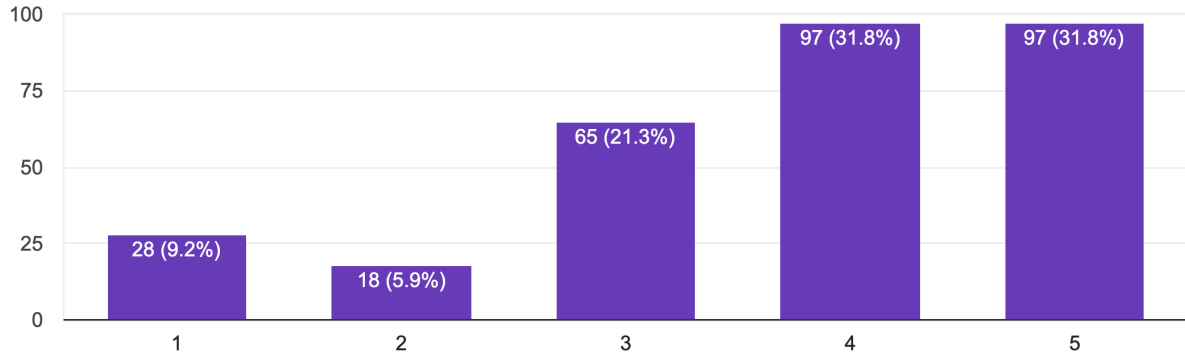
How often does stress negatively impact your work/school performance?



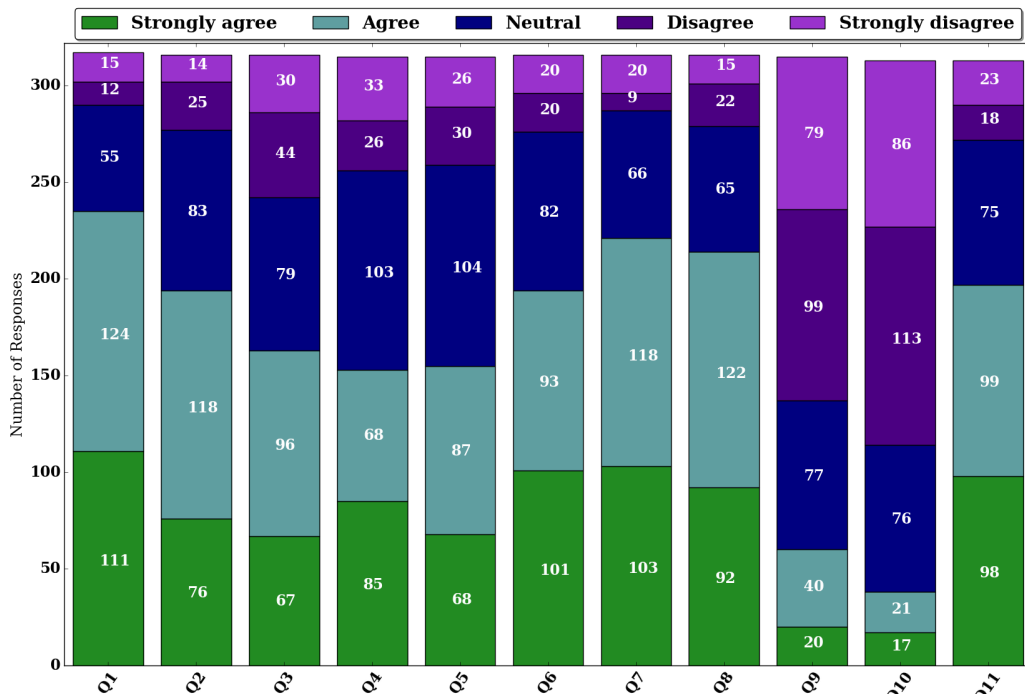
Advisor Relationships

Overall, I would rate my experience with my advisor:

305 responses



(5 representing great, 1 representing terrible)

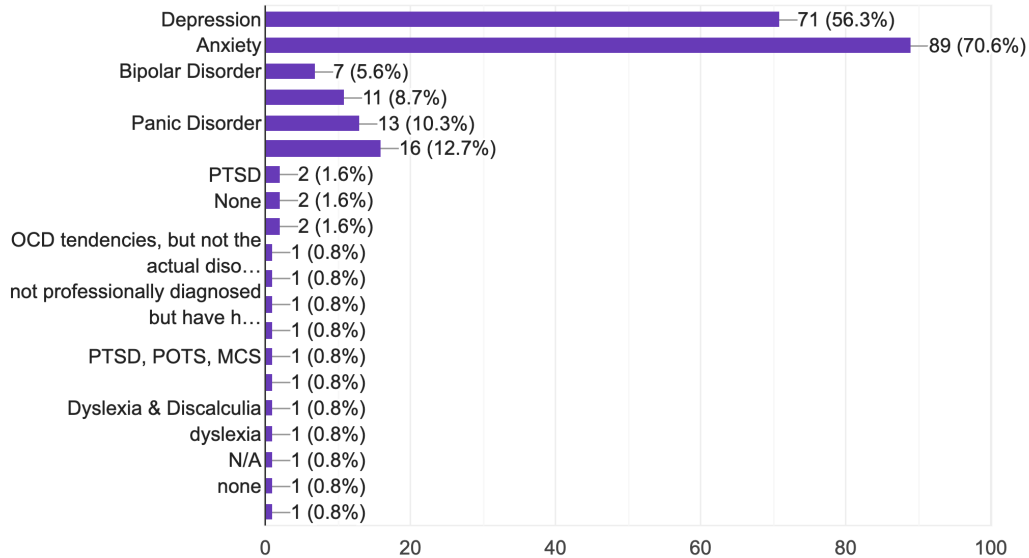


1. My advisor treats my ideas with respect
2. My advisor is available to me when I need help with research
3. My advisor gives me regular constructive feedback on my progress
4. My advisor helps me secure funding for my graduate studies
5. My advisor assists me in writing presentations and publications
6. My advisor advocates for me when necessary
7. My advisor has my best interests at heart
8. My advisor would support me in any career path I choose
9. My advisor sees me as a source of labor to advance her/his research
10. My advisor expects me to work so many hours that it is difficult to have a life outside of school
11. I have learned a lot from my advisor

Mental Health

Have you been diagnosed with any of the following conditions?

126 responses



*Note: only 126 out of 321 respondents answered this question

What is your number one daily concern as a graduate student?

- Work-life balance
 - Finances
 - Health
 - Productivity
 - Imposter syndrome (i.e., do I deserve to be here?)
 - Keeping on track towards desired degree
 - Time-Management
 - Pleasing Advisor/committee
 - Writing
- (Themes selected from all responses. Represented in no particular order)

Advisor Relationships

Some things I appreciate about my advisor are:

- ✱ Honesty and straightforwardness
- ✱ Answers emails promptly
- ✱ Availability
- ✱ Passion/knowledge of the field
- ✱ Assistance in career goals
- ✱ Encouraging feedback
- ✱ Supportive of student interests
- ✱ Patience
- ✱ Establishes a clear work-life balance
- ✱ Takes interest in the student outside of research

“Her willingness to help me pursue my interests even when they are not the norm our department, her treating me as a peer rather than beneath her, her always backing me up and standing up to others that would mistreat me or anyone in our lab”

Some things I wish my advisor did are:

- ✱ Provide constructive feedback
- ✱ Answer emails promptly
- ✱ Develop clear expectations
- ✱ Establish regular meetings
- ✱ Provide career guidance
- ✱ Have a thorough understanding of the program
- ✱ Be open and honest
- ✱ Establish clear goals and timelines
- ✱ Include positive feedback
- ✱ Understand the time and financial constraints placed on graduate students
- ✱ Reach out to students to offer help and guidance

“Have better communication, offer better guidance on how to complete my program, give me clear deadlines and expectations, ask to see my work and offer feedback, and overall just communicate better”

Actionable Suggestions from Grad Students:

Quick Fixes (doable in 1-5 years):

- ✱ Improved access to information about counseling services
 - ❖ Targeted to grad students who often feel resources are either geared towards undergrad students or faculty
- ✱ Clear guidance on degree requirements and plans
 - ❖ Including information about which classes to take and when, what documentation is necessary for graduation, etc.
- ✱ Assistance with parking as most grad students live off campus
- ✱ Accessible electronic options for Program of Study and other paperwork, especially for distance students
- ✱ Create a space on campus for graduate students to facilitate cross-program community
 - ❖ Build in more opportunities for graduate student programs, focused on skills like academic writing

Larger Systematic Issues

- ✱ Low wages and lack of dental insurance/quality health insurance add to overall stress and make the graduate school experience more difficult
- ✱ Need for a centralized 'graduate school' to represent students, especially when issues arise between students and advisors
- ✱ Need for training programs for advisors to improve mentoring experiences and potentially avoid the frequent advisor/graduate student conflicts
- ✱ Need for systematic evaluation of graduate student courses and course requirements, including input from graduate students