



Graduation Candidates Survey Report: Executive Summary

2019-2020

Executive Summary

This study seeks to identify aspects about the candidates for graduation while studying in the face-to-face campuses of the Ana G. Méndez University (UAGM). In addition, it aims to assess students' perception of student services and academic skills acquired. It analyzes the results for the UAGM and the venues that compose it: Carolina Campus, Gurabo Campus and Cupey Campus. The main objectives were as follows:

- Create a socio-demographic profile of the students who are candidates for graduation.
- Know the employment rate before you graduate.
- Know the perception of students about the services received.
- Know the relationship of your employment with studies.
- Compare the results with the previous study.

Main findings:

- 73.9% were women.
- 42.5% were between 20-24 years old.
- 54.7% graduated from high school and 24.6% from master's degree.
- 71.3% plan to continue studies (54.6% towards master's degrees).
- 59.4% would continue their studies at the UAGM institutions where they completed their studies.
- 77.3% worked while studying (8.9% of these in the institution itself; 42.2% in their area of study) in face-to-face institutions.
- 55.7% had a job at the time of graduation (71.6% of these full-time; 50.9% in their area of study).
- The lines of greatest satisfaction in the face-to-face institutions were: cleaning of the institution (93.5%), professional preparation they received (92.6%), and the quality of the teaching staff (91.5%).
- 85.1% would recommend other people to study the same concentration or study program at the UAGM.
- 81.9% consider that in general their experience in the institutions was satisfactory.

Conclusions

In this study, a profile of the students candidates for graduation in the academic year 2019-2020 was presented, which is a tool for the design of strategies to promote the academic programs of the Ana G. Méndez University (UAGM) and the university in general. To analyze the results, the COVID-19 emergency and the experience of students in remote mode during this period must be taken into account. The experience of having studied at the UAGM is a source of pride for most graduate candidates. Overall, **eight out of ten** respondents feel satisfied

with his educational experience and I would recommend other people to study in one of the campuses of the UAGM. More than half would again consider their campus as their first alternative to continue studies. The main reason for not considering continuing studies at the UAGM is for not offering the academic programs of interest and reflects an increase in those who are disappointed with the institution as the main reason for not choosing the UAGM.

A considerable number of graduation candidates worked while studying. This phenomenon is not new and it responds particularly to the economic and social situation of the country. The fact that more students are participating in the workforce today may respond to the increase in the cost of living and the constant increase in the cost of studies.

Regarding the employment situation at the time of graduation, half of the respondents indicated having a full-time job, reflecting a decrease in relation to the results obtained in the past study. Of these, half have a job related to their studies. When the means by which they obtained their jobs is carefully analyzed, it is important to highlight that most of the students indicated that they obtained their employment by their own management.

On the other hand – similar to previous studies – it is evident that the skills of speaking and writing correctly in English once again reflected the lower perception of added value. Therefore, these areas require immediate attention based on the perception of graduation candidates. These elements are critical within the core competencies of general education. In all the assertions, a decrease in the perception of added value is observed regarding the objectives that the institutions wished to develop in their students when compared with the previous study.

With regard to the services that complement the academic processes, such as the cleanliness of the institution, professional preparation and the quality of the teaching staff, it can be inferred that the majority of students who graduate from the UAGM face-to-face campuses feel that their expectations in relation to these values are met. Other important aspects for students, but that in the evaluation move away from their expectation (lower satisfaction) compared to other aspects are: laboratory equipment and materials, support services (tutorials, mentoring, etc.) and grade claims process. It is important to note that in all aspects the respondents indicated that they had less satisfaction with respect to the previous study.

Recommendations

- **Reinforce the promotion of** each institution's graduate programs among active students as most students indicated that they wish to continue graduate studies and do so at the same institution.
- Given that **over 70 percent of students work while studying**, it is necessary to take this into consideration when planning course scheduling. Likewise, the student services area should consider the development of support services for stress management and time management of the student worker.

- Although most students already had a job while studying, there is a need **to further evaluate the services of employment centers** on face-to-face campuses with a view to increasing their effectiveness in placement aspects.
- Emphasizing the **aspects of greater student satisfaction** should be one of the promotional strategies, mainly the professional preparation received, highlighted by all campuses. Likewise, it should be noted that **8 out of 10 of our graduate candidates are satisfied** with their experience at the UAGM and I would recommend it to others.
- Review and reinforce **the English language proficiency competencies** in the courses of the general education component, and even in the core and concentration components.
- Establish a structure of indicators that allow measuring the effectiveness of the activities implemented for the improvement of the areas.
- The planners assigned to the UAGM campuses must ensure that the corresponding offices follow up on the activities aimed at those aspects that require improvement, they must communicate these efforts to the Vice Presidency of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.
- Continue efforts to improve the response rate in the precincts.

Document translated from the source text in Spanish to the target language English. In the event of any inconsistency or ambiguity in relation to the meaning of any word or phrase in the English translation, the Spanish text shall prevail.