

2005 PEP Survey Results
MAS and Joint Students
by
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The 2005 Program Evaluation Project (PEP) Survey received a total of 91 responses. There were a total of 28 respondents who identified themselves as MAS or Joint students. One respondent also identified themselves as having a First Nations concentration. In most cases, the responses to each question are shown as a number out of 28. The answer choices for each close-ended question were “yes,” “no,” and “I don’t know.” Following each “yes/no” question was a space for elaboration. Comments indicated in this space will be summarized and in some cases directly quoted. Names of specific individuals have been removed. Two types of questions have been asked in the PEP Survey: those intended to provide feedback on student opinion for faculty and administration, and those intended to provide feedback for LASSA. All questions have been included in this report, although it is acknowledged that not all questions will be pertinent to the faculty and administration.

1. What is your program or course emphasis at SLAIS (i.e. First Nations)? Choose all that apply.

19/28 MAS
1/28 First Nations
9/28 Joint

2. When did you begin your coursework at SLAIS?

2/28 January 2005
9/28 September 2004
0/28 January 2004
12/28 September 2003
1/28 January 2003
4/28 Other

3. Approximately how many credits will you have completed by April 2005?

MAS results:
Basic Statistics
Count:19
Min:24.00
Max:48.00
Mean:39.79
Std Deviation:11.35
Mode:48.00
Median:48.00
Norm:180.00
Variance:128.84

Joint results:
Basic Statistics
Count:9
Min:12.00
Max:83.00
Mean:50.33
Std Deviation:29.00
Mode:12.00
Median:48.00
Norm:171.83
Variance:840.75

4. Are you paying full-time [Schedule A] or part-time [Schedule B] tuition fees?

27/28 Full-time [Schedule A]
1/28 Part-time [Schedule B]

5. Have the courses you have taken at SLAIS met your expectations?

16/28 Yes
8/28 No
4/28 I don't know

Comments: Out of 13 comments, 5 students expressed that courses were more theoretical and less practical than they had expected.

“I say that yes, my expectations were met, because I knew that the MAS program has a very theoretical bent coming into it. However, including practical components into courses wherever possible should be done; e.g., is there a course where we learn how to write a budget or grant proposals? Give us a chance to write an acquisition policy. Experience is important and some things make more sense when you actually do them.”

Students also expressed that some courses met expectations, while others did not. ARST 593A and ARST 516 were mentioned as courses that did not meet expectations. For joint students, repetitive courses such as LIBR 540 and ARST 540 were cited as problematic. The instructional quality of some courses was also mentioned as not meeting expectations.

7. Have all areas of interest been satisfied by the course selection?

7/28 Yes
19/28 No
2/28 I don't know

Comments: Again, students expressed interest in gaining practical experience to complement theory. The cancellation of the ERMS/EDMS course was disappointing to some; a course on current records management was recommended. Other areas of interest where students would like to see more courses included management courses geared specifically towards archives students,

courses on non-textual archives and private records, First Nations-centered courses, courses on electronic records, courses that focus on the interaction between museums, special collections, and archives, and IT courses.

One student noted: “As a Joint student, I would like to be exposed to Archival courses, and MAS students, sooner. The “core” did not provide that opportunity.”

9. Have you been able to schedule courses to your satisfaction?

24/28 Yes
3/28 No
1/28 I don't know

Comments: Suggestions included scheduling first-year and second-year classes on the same day, providing a greater variety of summer courses, and avoiding scheduling classes on Fridays. Some students noted that they have sometimes had to take up to three classes on one day.

11. Has the workload for the courses you have taken been appropriate?

21/28 Yes
6/28 No
1/28 I don't know

Comments: Many students seemed satisfied with the workload for courses, although Joint students noted that the workload varies widely between the library program and the archives program, as well as from instructor to instructor. ARST 554 and LIBR 510 were mentioned as having inappropriate workloads, and the amount of reading required for courses was indicated as onerous. Recommendations included a suggestion that instructors communicate more with one another to insure that large assignments aren't due on the same day, and that instructors should come prepared for each class. Another recommendation was to invite more guest speakers to classes and to replace long lectures with discussion seminars.

13. Does your workload affect the quality of your learning experiences at SLAIS?

21/28 Yes
5/28 No
2/28 I don't know

Comments: Students expressed concerns that their workload in courses prohibited them from learning as much or delving into topics in as much depth as they would have liked.

“In some courses, I felt that there was not sufficient time to develop original thoughts on the topics or deep understandings of concepts before churning out papers and presentations. In others, where there were no real expectations to read any of the literature (or at least, it was not referred to at all in class), I also did not learn as much as I could.”

“The school workload on its own is heavy. However, we also hear that there are all sorts of other things we should be doing or experience we should be getting. So I do take other workshops, I do work in jobs in my field (although I also do this because I need money), I do volunteer, I do try to get involved in other activities to get this "experience." And this gets overwhelming. I'm sure I could put more into my classes, but I have to weigh it against other things.”

15. Have you taken, or do you plan to take, summer courses while studying at SLAIS?

14/27 Yes
13/27 No
0/27 I don't know

16. If yes, have you found that summer course offerings are adequate to your needs?

8/22 Yes
8/22 No
6/22 I don't know

Comments: Many students would like a greater variety and number of archives course offerings in the summer.

18. Please use this space to express any additional comments, concerns, or questions about SLAIS curriculum and courses.

Comments: One student felt that the InterPARES project interfered with classes. Other suggestions and recommendations included: more explicit connections made between what students are learning in classes and work they will be doing in their careers, smaller class sizes, making the internship worth more than 3 credits and/or allowing the internship to be paid, offering more First Nations courses and a course on GIS, allowing joint students to take classes outside of SLAIS, and allowing joint students to do the First Nations concentration. There was concern that SLAIS was not doing enough to support the First Nations concentration, and complaints were made regarding the quality, comfort, and set-up of classrooms, which did not facilitate discussion and debate.

“I wish there were some assurances that something positive will come out of the recent curriculum review. I find it mystifying that no public details were presented to the students by the student representatives on the committee. We all have a vested interest in the success of the program but I am finding it very difficult to support my school when the quality of teaching is on the decline.”

19. Does LASSA adequately represent your interests as a SLAIS student?

15/28 Yes
1/28 No
12/28 I don't know

Comments: Most students were indifferent towards LASSA, citing that they did not have time to partake in events or meetings, or citing that they had little interest in the organization. Some students wanted more information about what LASSA does for students. One student mentioned that they felt the LASSA orientation in September should have been earlier in the week.

21. Have you had sufficient opportunities to participate in SLAIS student life?

21/28 Yes
5/28 No
2/28 I don't know

Comments: Most students felt that they have had sufficient opportunity to participate in student life. Some students were either not interested in the types of events offered, or cited personal time restrictions for attending events.

23. Have you had the opportunity to interact to your satisfaction with students from SLAIS programs and course concentrations other than your own? (i.e., if you are an MAS student, have you been able to interact with MLIS or MACL students?)

10/27 Yes
15/27 No
2/27 I don't know

Comments: Many students felt that they had little opportunity to interact with students from other SLAIS programs. Reasons cited included: time restrictions due to other commitments, distance of TEF in relation to other buildings on campus, differing schedules, and the large majority of library students in comparison to students in other programs. Some students cited the division between the library and archival programs as a barrier to interaction. Some students, however, felt that there was ample opportunity for interaction, and that it was up to the students to take advantage of these opportunities.

25. Are you currently in debt due to the cost of your post-secondary education and incurred living expenses?

23/27 Yes
4/27 No
0/18 I don't know

26. If yes, what is your approximate debt load due to post-secondary education expenses?

11/25 \$0 - \$10,000
4/25 \$11,000 - \$20,000
10/25 \$21,000 +

27. Please use this space to express any additional comments, concerns, or questions about SLAIS student life.

Comments: One student felt that LASSA should not spend money on candy for students, but should put that money towards leasing a copy machine. Another student felt that MAS classes for first year and second year students should be scheduled on the same day, if possible. Another student expressed appreciation for LASSA events. The kitchen access was appreciated, as were the Lab I bookings being posted on the bulletin board and web site. One student commented that MAS students should be encouraged to return library books in a timely manner, and complained about the disappearance of *Archivaria* journals from SLAIS.

28. Are you satisfied with the effectiveness of communication between students and faculty?

22/28 Yes
4/28 No
2/28 I don't know

Comments: Most students felt that faculty made an effort to be open to students and communicated in a timely and approachable manner. Some students felt that faculty should make more of an effort to attend student gatherings and share their research with students. A recommendation was made that instructors should double-check for errors and completeness on syllabi before handing them out to eradicate miscommunication later on in the course.

30. Are you satisfied with the effectiveness of communication between students and administrators?

20/27 Yes
1/27 No
6/27 I don't know

Comments: Most students expressed positive experiences of communicating with administration. In general, students felt that office staff and administration were helpful and friendly. There were concerns about the summer registration process, as well as the timely cashing of SLAIS and LASSA fees. Some students felt that there had not been enough communication between administration and students.

31. Is your relationship with your advisor satisfactory?

19/28 Yes
3/28 No
6/28 I don't know

Comments: Several students felt they had a positive and rewarding relationship with their advisors. Some students did not feel that they had a satisfactory relationship with their advisors, but had found other faculty, students, or professionals who could answer their questions and provide advice.

32. Please use this space to express any additional comments, concerns, or questions about SLAIS faculty, administration, and staff.

Comments:

“I feel that this semester a couple of my professors (adjunct and sessional) are not adequate teachers—their lecturing style is boring, and their knowledge of the content does not seem adequate. There should be a review panel to make sure that whoever is teaching a course has experience in teaching, and they have been reviewed by faculty prior to the course beginning. It is not fair to students if they are being taught a course that could have been taught by a more worthy faculty member, by someone who may never have taught the course before, or taught any courses at all.”

“Because I am also in the FN Concentration, I am having some confusion about who I should be addressing what questions to, the concentration coordinator or my advisor - I tend to turn more toward my advisor because the coordinator is on the Library side. Could there be someone who knows about/has some responsibility for the concentration on the Archives side as well?”

“Hooray for our excellent MAS faculty, whose perspectives and writings about archival science do much to professionalize our field. Bring on the theory! But please do give us some opportunities to complete some practice-oriented assignments (such as policy writing, scheduling, grant writing, etc.).”

“The MAS faculty is wonderful! They just need one or two more instructors to create a richer program.”

“Why is there not more cooperation between the UBC library administration and the SLAIS administration? The head librarians on campus should be involved more with SLAIS students. There should also be more inter-department involvement between the Master of Science in Information Systems people and the computer tech programs on campus.”

35. How can the PEP survey be improved in the future?

Comments: Most students expressed satisfaction with the survey. Recommendations included: more anonymity, clarifying what kind of comments should go in each section, and implementing a way to save the survey and come back to it later. One student commented that they have not seen the results of previous surveys, and did not know where they could be found.