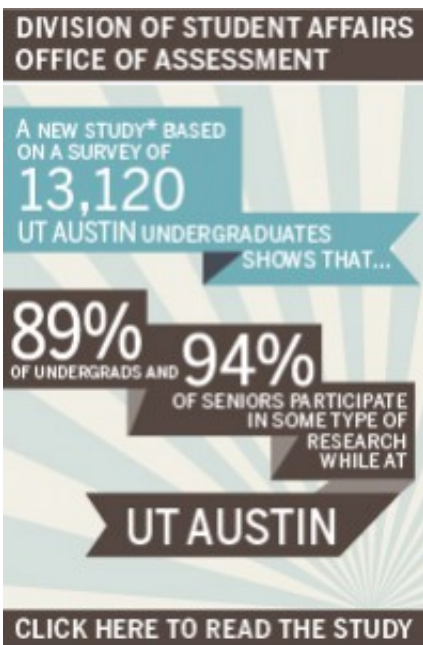


New study confirms benefits of a research university to student success

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About 89 percent of all undergraduate students and 94 percent of seniors participate in some type of research while at The University of Texas at Austin, according to a new study released this month from the Office of Assessment for the university's Division of Student Affairs. Based on a survey of 13,120 undergraduates, the report reveals that 71 percent of students agree that the university is strongly committed to undergraduate education.

[“The University of Texas at Austin and the Research University Advantage” report](#) is based on data from the Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) survey, a 2011 national survey that included other top-tier research universities such as the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

“Most of our [undergraduate students](#) do participate in research, be it in class or out of class, and do so at higher rates than is typical at most college campuses across the United States,” said Gale Stuart, director of assessment for the division.

The data confirm that students who are more engaged in research activities have higher grade point averages (GPAs), are more likely to graduate within four years and have plans to attend graduate school. Additionally, the study showed that the university’s prestige is important to most students when applying for a job or graduate school.

“Students also appreciate being able to take courses from renowned researchers that refer to their own research in lectures,” added Stuart.

The study provides early evidence that students involved in healthy co-curricular activities have higher GPAs and graduate in four years. The analysis defied the perception that students who are more socially engaged may take longer to graduate. Healthy out-of-classroom activities include participating in community service, clubs, organizations and sports/fitness.

"As with everything else in life, it is about achieving balance — it is in these extracurricular environments that students develop the support structures that allow them to weather the adversities during their four years of college that might otherwise undermine a successful academic experience," said David Laude, who is moving to the university Provost’s

Office from his current position as interim dean of the College of Natural Sciences. On July 15 he will become senior vice provost of enrollment and graduation management to lead the university's effort to increase four-year graduation rate to 70 percent.

Achieving this goal is critical to reducing the cost of higher education to students, parents and taxpayers and also will give more [students](#) the opportunity to learn and grow at a major research university. It also ultimately helps Texas and the nation build future generations of strong citizens and leaders.

Stuart presented the study results yesterday to The University of Texas System's Chancellor Francisco Cigarroa's Dashboard Expert Group on Student Success, which is focused on his "Framework for Advancing Excellence." The framework action plan outlines nine focus areas including research and undergraduate student access and success, which includes increasing four-year graduation rates.

Provided by University of Texas at Austin

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