

# 2008 UMFK Graduate Exit Report

## Methodology

This survey was designed to assess the overall experience of graduating students while they were at UMFK, along with their future plans, whether for further education or on the job market. The survey questionnaire was designed and fielded by Kate Fecinta (Student Success Coordinator), with input and assistance from the Office of Institutional Research. In May of 2008, prior to graduation, all students were asked to complete the questionnaire as part of their exit process. A copy of the survey questionnaire is attached.

## Analysis of 2008 Results

Of the 293 graduating students, 47 (16%) students responded to the survey. Of these, 55% (n= 26) were female, 83% (n=39) were commuters, and 87% (n=41) were full time students. Table 1 (below) summarizes other basic characteristics of these respondents. It is interesting to note that over 33% of these graduates were over 25 years old, and almost 18% were 35 or older. This is an illustration of the increasing size of the nontraditional population at UMFK. As would be expected, the largest group of respondents majored in education (23.4%, n=11); the next largest group were nursing majors (14.9%, n=7).

**TABLE 1 - Demographic Information**

<u>Age</u>	Frequency	Percent	<u>Degree</u>	Frequency	Percent	<u>Final GPA</u>	Frequency	Percent
Under 21	7	14.9	AA	3	6.5	2.00-2.50	2	4.3
21-25	24	21.1	AS	5	10.6	2.51-3.00	2	4.3
25-34	8	17.0	BA	5	10.6	3.01-3.50	11	23.4
35-44	4	8.5	BS	13	27.7	3.51-4.00	10	21.3
45-54	2	4.3	BSES	1	2.1	Total	25	100.00
65 +	2	4.3	BSN	8	17.0			
Total	47	100.0	BUS	11	23.4			
			Total	47	100.00			

**TABLE 1 (cont.)**

Major

	Frequency	Percent
Behavioral / Social Science / Human Services	7	14.6
Business / Computer Science / ECommerce	7	14.6
Criminal Justice / Public Safety Administration	7	14.6
Elementary / Secondary Education	12	25.4
Environmental Studies / Biology	4	8.3
Forestry	3	6.2
Nursing	8	16.8
Total	48*	100.00

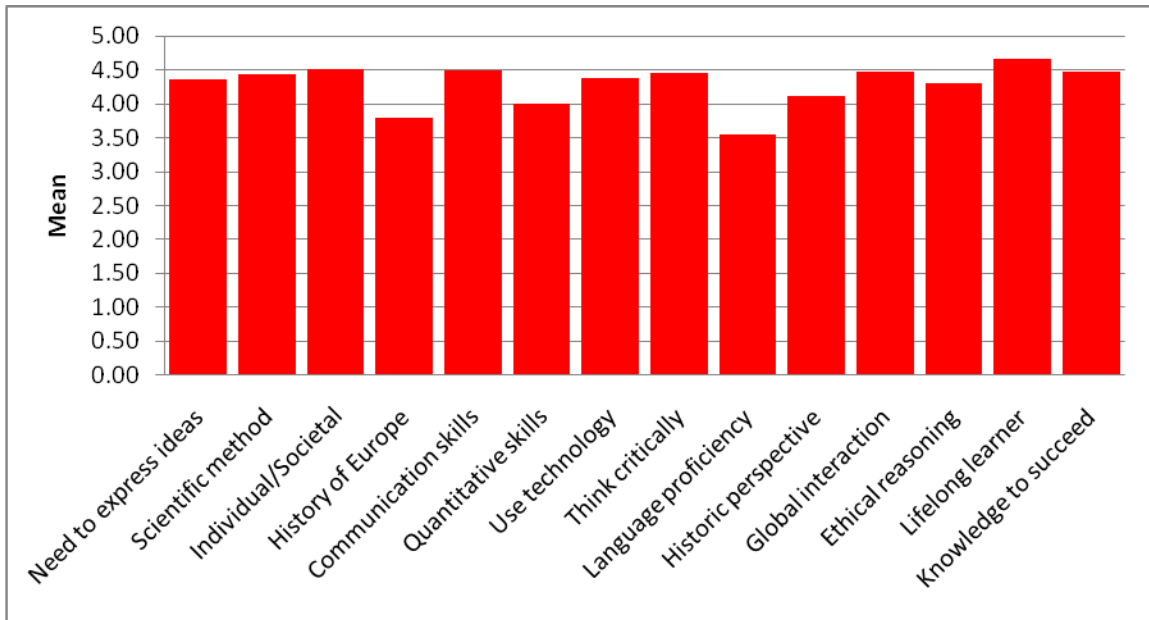
\*There was one double major

When asked to rate Global Learning outcomes, graduates gave highest ratings to their ability to be a lifelong learner (mean=4.66, n=47, on a scale where 1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree) and to understand individual and societal behaviors (mean=4.51, n=47). General Learning Outcomes where respondents gave the lowest ratings were in their proficiency in a language other than English (mean=3.6, n=47), and in their understanding of European history (mean=3.79, n=47). Overall, most graduates appear to be well pleased with their experience at UMFK; respondents gave a mean rating of 4.3 to aspects of their General Learning Outcomes, and consistently ranked Global Learning Outcomes at a rating of “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”, yielding relatively high average scores, as shown in Figure 1.

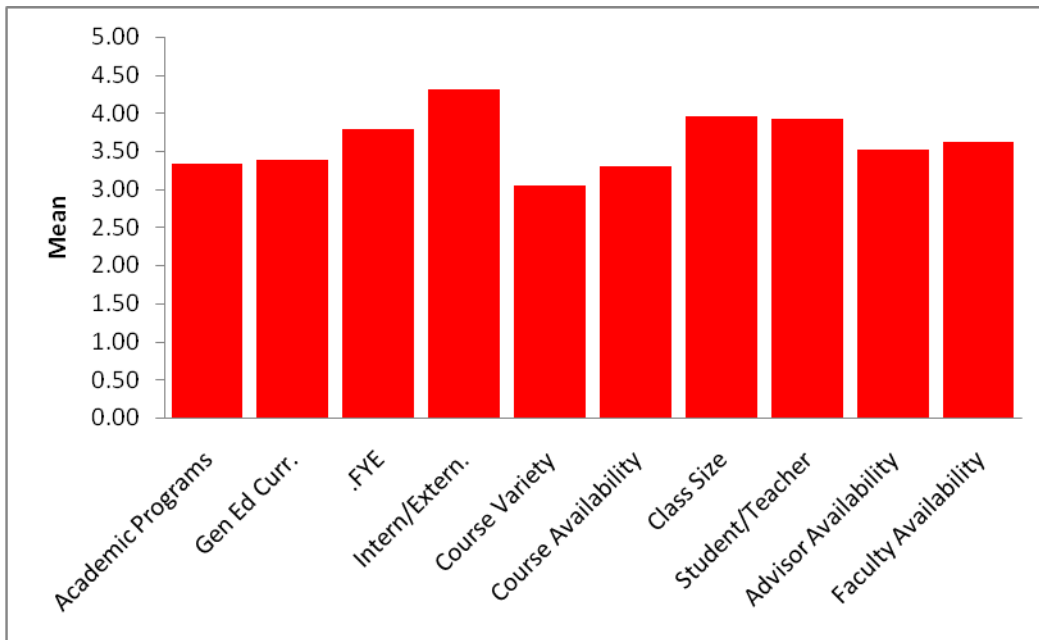
Respondents gave a mean rating of 3.61 to aspects of their Academic Environment. Graduates evaluating the UMFK Academic Environment gave particularly high ratings to the quality of internship/externship programs (mean=4.32, n=47, on a scale where 1=Unsatisfactory and 5=Excellent) and to class size (mean=3.06, n=47). Aspects of the Academic Environment that were poorly rated were course variety (mean=3.04, n=47) and course availability

(mean=3.30, n=47). Outside of these two aspects, ratings of the Academic Environment were somewhat lower than those for Global Learning Outcomes, with scores consistently below 4.0; the overall mean was 3.61 (n=47).

**Figure 1 – Ratings for Global Learning Outcomes**

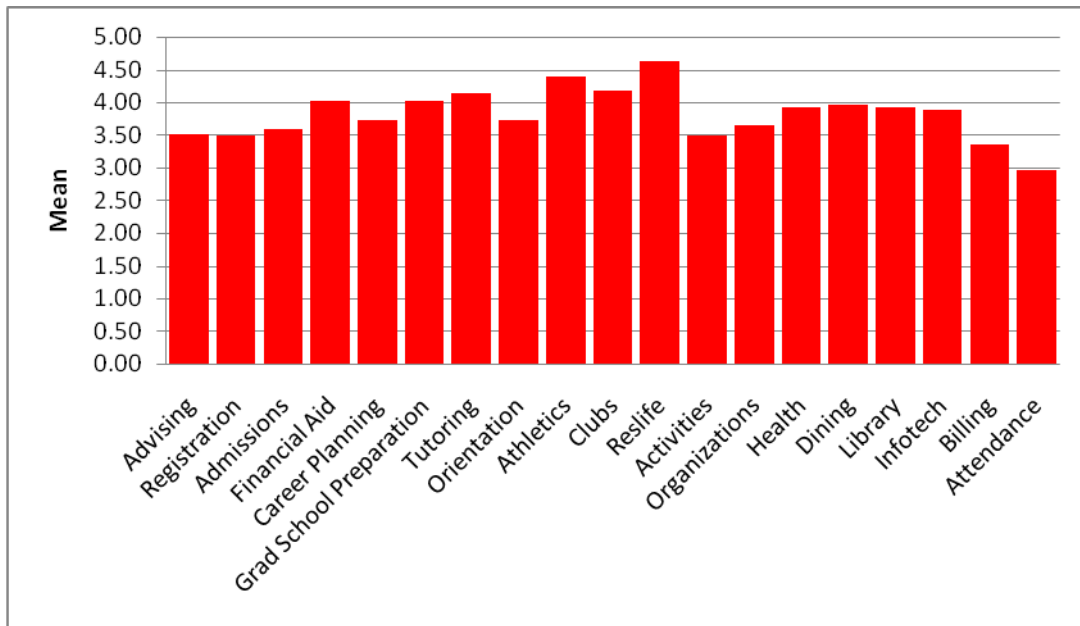


**Figure 2 – Ratings for Academic Environment**



When rating individual School Programs, graduates gave an average score of 3.81, reflecting a pattern of ratings at or above 3.5. Residential Life received the highest ratings (mean=4.62, n=47, on a scale where 1=Unsatisfactory and 5=Excellent). Almost as highly rated were Athletics (mean=4.38, n=47). Lowest rated school programs included Cost of Attendance (mean=2.96, n=47) and Billing, where the mean was 3.35 (n=47).

**Figure 3 – Ratings for School Programs**



Demographic variables (such as occupation, employment status, or income) do not appear to affect graduate students' evaluation of UMFK. One exception to this is that older respondents do appear to have slightly higher overall evaluations of the academic environment, as suggested by the slight positive correlation ( $r = .330, p < .05$ ) shown in Table 2. Older students also have a slightly higher rating for school programs ( $r = .304, p < .05$ ). Reflecting the interconnected nature of programs and environment, there is a moderate correlation ( $r = .466, p < .01$ ) between overall mean ratings of School Programs and of Academic Environment. There is also a moderate (though slightly lower) correlation ( $r = .386, p < .01$ ) between overall mean

ratings of General Learning Outcomes and of Academic Environment. Unsurprisingly, higher GPAs are also associated with higher evaluations of learning outcomes ( $r = .416, p < .05$ ).

**Table 2 – Correlations of Selected Measures**

	General Learning Outcomes Ratings	Academic Environment Ratings	School Programs Ratings	Applied to Graduate School	Employed	Age
Academic Environment Ratings	.300**					
School Programs Ratings	.386**	.466**				
Applied to Graduate School	.013	-.078	.056			
Employed	-.220	.077	-.056	.220		
Age	.000	.330*	.304*	-.042	-.057	
GPA	.416*	-.042	.277	-.281	-.293	.380

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

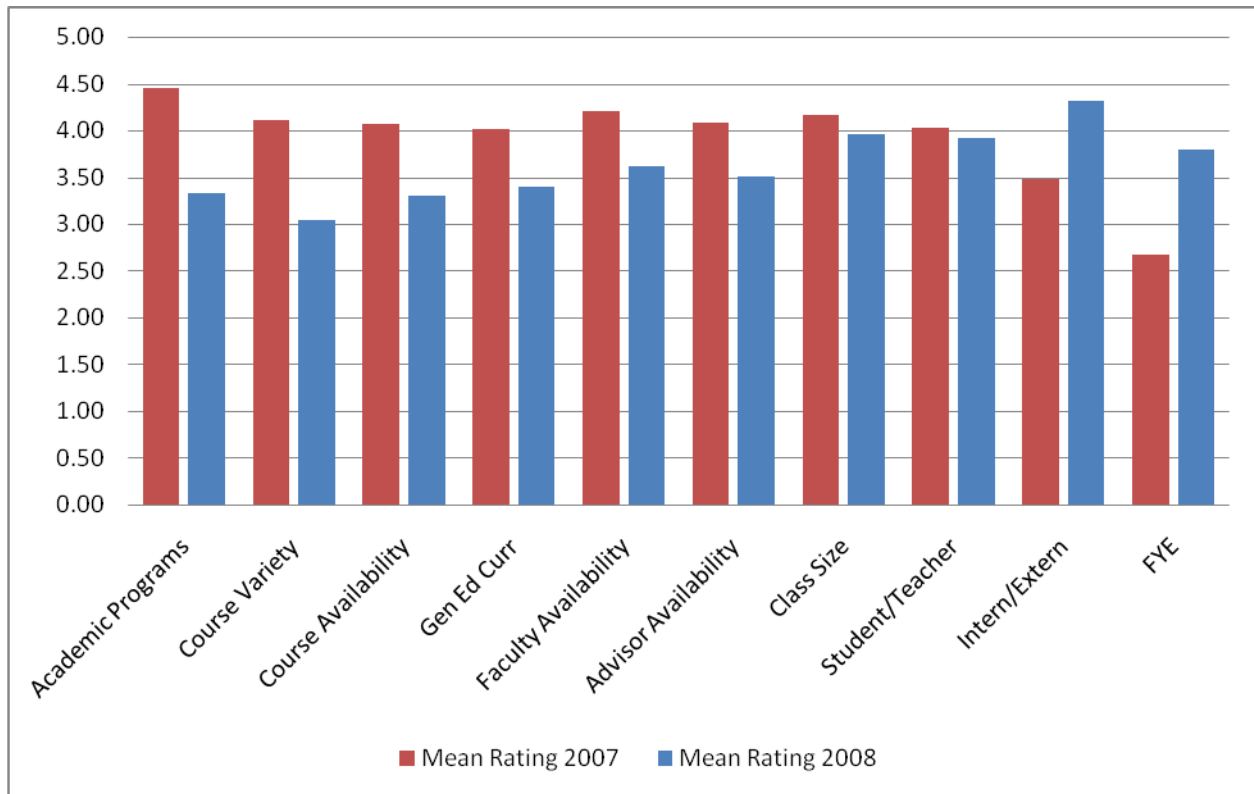
\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

### Comparison to 2007 Results

Graduates in 2008 hold much the same opinion about learning outcomes as earlier graduates. As in 2007, 2008 graduates rated nearly all the items at 4 (“Agree”) or above. One exception to this was Language Proficiency, where the 2007 mean rating was 2.97 and the 2008 mean was 3.55. The other exception was in European History, where the 2007 mean rating was 3.45 and the 2008 mean was 3.79.

However, most items in the Academic Environment were rated somewhat differently by graduating students in 2008 and in 2007. As shown in Figure 4, Significant drop offs (more than a full point on a 5 point scale) occurred from 2007 to 2008 in the areas of Academic Programs and Course Variety. Most other items had some drop off, ranging from .77 for Course Variety to .57 for Advisor Availability; Class Size and Student/Teacher Ratio had slightly lower but essentially equal ratings in 2008. The only two items where higher ratings are seen are Intern/Externship Programs, with an increase of .87, and FYE, which increased by over a point.

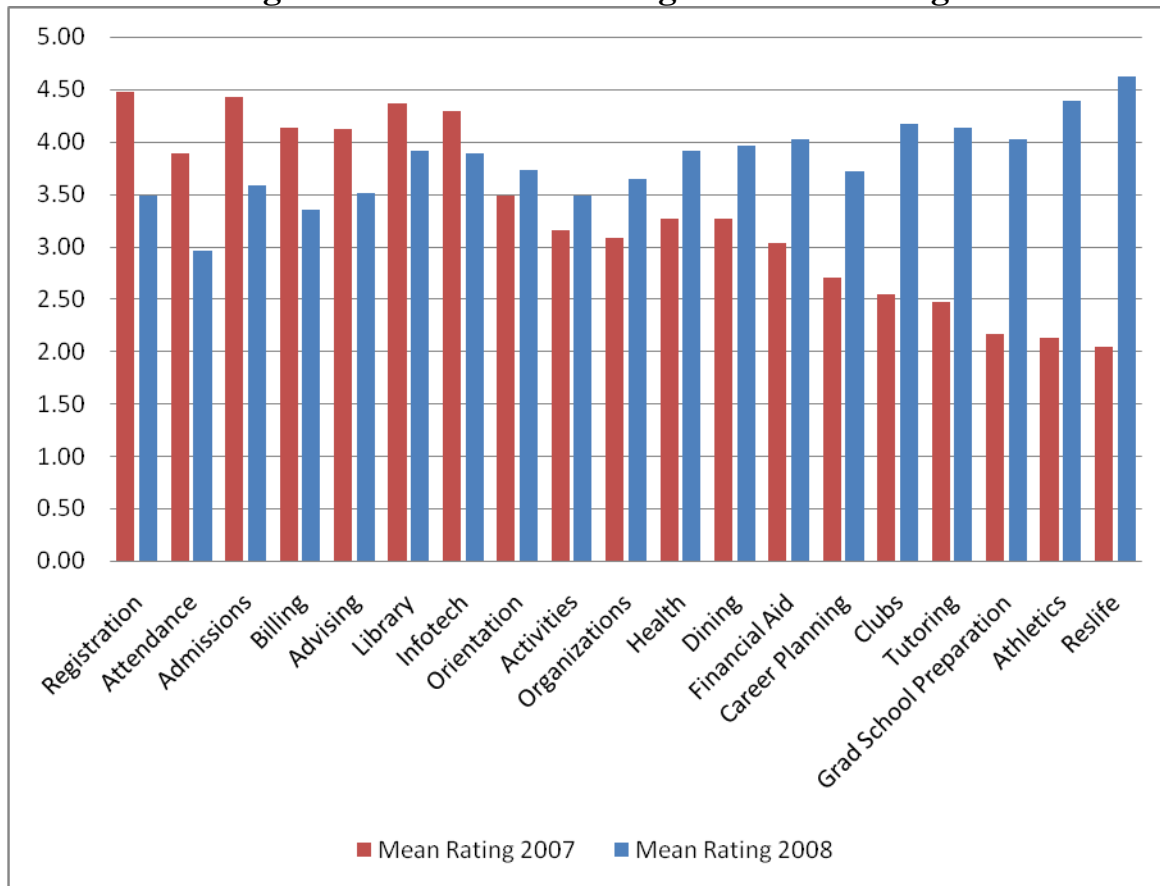
**Figure 4 – Two-Year Ratings for Academic Environment**



An extremely curious pattern is shown by the ratings for School Programs. As can be seen in Figure 5, nearly all items previously rated low had higher rating in 2008, while nearly all items rated high in 2007 had lower 2008 ratings. This pattern is so pronounced that only one item (Orientation) had fairly equal ratings from one year to the next. This marks what can only be called a nearly complete reversal of student attitudes in the course of one year, though only in the area of School Programs. Student attitudes did vary somewhat in other areas, but not so markedly as to indicate opposite opinions.

This pattern of rough equivalence in student attitudes is also shown in the relationship between various aspects of their evaluations. As can be seen in Table 5, Academic Environment continues to have a moderately positive correlation with both School Programs and Global

**Figure 5 – Two Year Ratings for School Programs**



**Table 3 – Correlations of Selected Measures**

	General Learning Outcomes Ratings	Academic Environment Ratings	School Programs Ratings
2008 Academic Environment Ratings	0.300**		
2007 Academic Environment Ratings	0.313**		
2008 School Programs Ratings	0.386**	0.466**	
2007 School Programs Ratings	0.153	0.482**	
2008 Applied to Grad School	0.012	-0.078	-0.056
2007 Applied to Grad School	0.039	-0.166	-0.374**
2008 Age	0.000	0.330*	0.304*
2007 Age	0.057	-0.292*	-0.283*
2008 GPA	0.416*	-0.042	0.277
2007 GPA	0.086	0.042	-0.058

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Learning Outcomes, and School Programs are also positively correlated with General Learning Outcomes. From 2007 to 2008, all aspects of the school experience appear to continue to work together. Applying to graduate school appeared to affect evaluations in 2007, but no longer does so; GPA did not have an effect in 2007 but appears to positively affect evaluations in 2008. Student age had an *opposite* effect in 2008 from what we saw in 2007: in 2007 age appeared to lower evaluations, while this year's evaluations apparently were higher for older students.

## **Conclusions**

Our graduates do appear to regard UMFK highly, and to have gained from their time here. They also report that they leave with important skills and resources for their future. This year's Graduation Survey offered further evidence that our students leave UMFK with the benefits of a positive experience. Although the details of specific ratings differ from last year, both groups reveal similarly high evaluations of our learning outcomes, academic environment, and school programs. It is difficult to infer any wider pattern of characteristics from such a small sample, although the comparison to last year's results is revealing. Still, any generalizations made from these findings will be inherently suspect. In future, more attention must be paid to disseminating the survey and encouraging response from a wider range of students. It will also be important to conduct some short interviews of students to probe more complex issues than a simple questionnaire can address.

**APPENDIX - Graduation Survey**

The purpose of this survey is for the university to get a better understanding of what you have experienced as a student in addition to how you might use it to relate to everyday activities after graduation. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey and be honest so that we may better serve the student body.

General Learning Outcomes

Please rate the following statements as they relate to your learning experience as an undergraduate student at UMFK:

**SA** = Strongly Agree    **A** = Agree    **N** = Neutral    **D** = Disagree    **SD** = Strongly Disagree

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
I understand and appreciate the human need to express feelings and ideas through the Arts and Humanities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand that the scientific method and principles of physical/biological sciences can be applied to other areas of thought and practice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand that individual and societal behaviors affect humankind	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand the history of European and Euro-influenced societies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident in my ability to use written and oral communication to exchange thoughts, ideas and information with a variety of audiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident in my ability to use quantitative skills and apply them to mathematical and other situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident in my ability to utilize current technology to effectively and critically analyze information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel confident in my ability to think critically by exploring different perspectives, interpreting and evaluating evidence, applying innovative and logical reasoning, and developing one's own ideas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have achieved a basic level of proficiency in a language other than English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a general understanding of historical perspectives and am able to apply them to current and future situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand the importance of global knowledge, diversity, and the interaction between cultures and societies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have gained the ethical reasoning and civil engagement skills necessary to be a responsible member of a rural democratic community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have gained the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become a lifelong learner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have gained the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become a successful professional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Academic Environment**

Please rate the following characteristics according to your experience as an undergraduate student at UMFK:

**E** = Excellent    **VG** = Very Good    **G** = Good    **F** = Fair    **U** = Unsatisfactory  
**N/A** = Not Applicable

Statement	E	VG	G	F	U	N/A
Quality of Academic Programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of General Education Curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of First Year Experience Course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internship/Externship/Preceptorship Program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Variety of Courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Course Availability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Class Size	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student: Teacher Ratio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advisor Availability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Faculty Availability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Services and Processes**

Please rate your experience with the following services while you were an undergraduate student at UMFK:

**E** = Excellent    **VG** = Very Good    **G** = Good    **F** = Fair    **U** = Unsatisfactory  
**N/A** = Not Applicable

Statement	E	VG	G	F	U	N/A
Advising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Registration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Admissions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Aid	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Career Planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Graduate School Preparation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tutoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
New Student Orientation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Varsity Athletics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Club/Intramural Athletics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Residence Life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



