# Exit Survey of 4th Year Students – Survey Goals and Structure

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## *1 – Purpose*

1) The current 4th year EOS student cohort is the only one that has not experienced course transformations as part of the ongoing EOS Science Education Initiative (SEI). The exit survey results from this group would establish a "baseline" with which to compare future survey results.

2) The exit survey will provide extensive data on 4th year students, their learning experiences, and their thoughts about the EOS program. The survey may change based on the student responses this year.


Students graduating from UBC

Lambeosaurus skeleton in EOS Pacific Museum of the Earth

## *2 – Preliminary Work (Jan - Apr 2009)*

- Discussion and feedback from 20+ faculty in EOS
- 1-hour "brown bag" discussion with 8 faculty members
- Two EOS student focus groups (4th year students)
  - 5 students in each, range of majors/honours, 1.5 hours long
  - 4 broad, program-level questions; 6 SEI-focused questions
- Four one-on-one student interviews (4th year students)
  - Range of majors and honours, 1 hour long interview
  - 10 questions probing student experience
- Examination of exit surveys from other Earth Science programs
- Discussions with UBC collaborators (Harald Yurk, Gulnur Birol)

## *3 – Focus Group and Interview Results*

Common themes from student responses:

- Students generally satisfied with EOS degree programs
- Field experiences were identified as critically important and unique to EOS; students wanted more field opportunities
- Concerned about frequency of course offerings (certain courses are offered too infrequently, especially upper-level courses)
- Pre-requisites occasionally unenforced by professor
- Students want some 1st year EOS courses for students who know they want to major in EOS
- Student space and community are issues that need attention from the department administration

Student focus group

Focus Group Finding: Students value field experiences

## *4 – Development and Implementation*

- Focus group/Interview questions and findings guided survey question development
- Survey format based on UBC Life Sciences exit survey, special thanks to Harald Yurk
- Some Life Science questions kept, later comparison could yield interesting results
- Online survey is currently being test run; survey link will be emailed to all graduating EOS students in first week of May 2009

Screen-shot of the Online EOS Exit Survey (Questions 1 to 3)

Inputted data is collected as a text doc for later analysis

# UBC EOS Graduation Exit Survey - April 2009

**Dear Student,**

As part of the Department's effort to provide the most effective and relevant degree programs, we would like to hear your perspective on a number of topics. While completing this survey, please try to consider your overall experiences, rather than focusing up on a single course. There is no right or wrong answer to any of these questions so the first response that comes to mind is likely also the best response.

We thank you for your help in this process and we wish you success and fulfillment in your future endeavors. If you have any concerns/suggestions about the EOS PROGRAM EXIT SURVEY, please contact Joshua Caulkins <caulkins@eos.ubc.ca> ( 604... ).

We ask you to enter your Name and Student ID for demographic purposes only. Personal identifiers will be removed in all reports of the results of this survey together with the information on the last page.

Please enter your first name:

Please enter your last name:

Please enter your student ID:

## Part I. First, what were your reasons for choosing the program that you are enrolled in, and what are your career goals?

**1. My goal after getting my degree is to (*mark your first, second, and third choice*):**

| | Enter a graduate degree program in Earth or Environmental Sciences | Enter a professional degree program (e.g. Engineering, Law, MBA, DDS, MD, etc.) | Enter an academic degree program not directly related to EOS (e.g. Journalism, Political Science, Linguistics, etc.) | Enter the work force in a job related to my EOS degree | Enter the work force in a job NOT related to my degree | Other (specify below) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. First. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| b. Second. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| c. Third. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Additional comments, or explanation of "other"

| **2. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?** | strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| "I had a clear career goal when entering my program." | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| **3. How did the following person(s) influence your choice of a career goal?** | not at all | a little | some | quite a bit | very much |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. University Faculty Member | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| b. University Academic Advisor | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| c. Friends/Peers | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| d. Parents/Siblings | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| e. High School Counselor | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| f. Other (specify below) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Explanation only if you chose "Other".

Screen-shot of the Online EOS Exit Survey (Questions 37 to 43)

Inputted data is collected as a text doc for later analysis

| 37. Regarding professors in EOS, I feel the program would would benefit if they... | strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. could present more effective lectures | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| b. run group activities more effectively | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| c. worked more closely together when more than one was teaching a course | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| d. made more explicit connections between pre-requisite material or skills | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| e. used a wider variety of testing mechanisms | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| f. provided more effective feedback on work and tests | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| g. provided feedback more rapidly following work or tests | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| h. other (specify below) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| Comments on this section and/or explanation of "other" | | | | | |

| 38 Field experiences: | I did not take this field course | strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Experiences in eosc223 "Field Techniques" (Saltspring) were a valuable part of my degree | ◉ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| b. Experiences in eosc328 "Field Geology" (Oliver) were a valuable part of my degree | ◉ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| c. Experiences in eosc328 "Field Techniques in Groundwater Hydrology" (Richmond) were a valuable part of my degree | ◉ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| d. Field experiences in other courses were a valuable part of my degree (please identify which courses). | ◉ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| other field experiences | | | | | | |
| e. I would appreciate MORE field experiences during my degree. | | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| In general, how would you characterize your experience studying EOS at UBC? | strongly disagree | disagree | neutral | agree | strongly agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 39. I enjoyed studying EOS at UBC | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 40. I experienced a strong sense of community in the EOS program. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

41. How might community be enhanced in the EOS program?

Improving community

42. The most positive learning experience I had within EOS was (please explain):

positive learning experiences

43. If I could change one thing about my learning experience in EOS it would be (please explain):

# EOS 4th Year Focus Group Questions

1) Do you feel this program adequately prepared you for the next step in your career? Why or why not?

   Follow-up: Do you feel the program is flexible enough to accommodate your short-term and long-term career goals?

   Was it too flexible? Not flexible enough?

2) If you would have to select one specific course or series of courses that will become required for all EOS students, what would it be and WHY?

   Follow-up: Is there one course **within the EOS program** that you feel should be required?

3) Name one or more important skills you have developed while studying in EOS.

   Follow-up: Examples: Geologic mapping, mineral/rock ID, matlab, reading/evaluating scientific papers, critical thinking skills, efficient use of your time, etc.)

4A) Name one (or more) things that you would like to change about your experience within EOS.

4B) Name one (or more) things that you absolutely would not change about EOS.

   Follow-up: If you could change one thing about your specific sub-discipline program, what would it be? (e.g. General EOS major, geological engineering, geological sciences, geophysics, oceanography, atmospheric sciences, environmental sciences, etc.)

**Specific questions on the pre-requisites, gaps and overlaps in the EOS academic program.**

1) The "first year" in EOS is quite flexible for students and is intended to offer breadth. Did you feel you were prepared for 2nd year, given the first year courses you chose? (they have to take 2 of the 11x lecture courses, but they can choose any two).

2) For courses with prerequisites, did you find that you needed the prerequisites to succeed in the course? Or was the necessary material repeated anyway?

3) Many of the 3rd and 4th year courses in EOS have only 2nd year prerequisites. Did you feel there was repetition in the 3rd and 4th year courses that might be alleviated by a prerequisite structure? Do you feel you could have learned more/gone farther with a more guided prerequisite structure?

4) One of the only (if not the only) course common too many EOS students is EOSC 111. Did you take this early enough in your program that it was useful to you later? If you did take it early, did you find it useful for later courses?

5) First year science is assumed for many upper level courses in EOS. Did you find that your EOS courses effectively utilized what you learned in first year physics, chemistry, and math?

6) Were there courses you took that seemed unrelated to the rest of your program?

# EOS 4th Year One-on-One Interview Questions

1) If you had to decide again on your major, what would you choose and why?

   Follow-up: Did you consider other programs either inside or outside EOS? While studying did you consider switching programs and were you aware of other possibly related programs? If so, which ones?

2) What do you plan to do immediately after graduation? (e.g. grad school, job, time off, etc.?)

   Follow-up: If you know, when did you decide on that plan? Did any EOS course or professor help you to make that decision?

   What other career ideas have you considered? Do you have a long-term career plan? If so, what is it?

3) Why did you select the specialization you are in? (e.g. general EOS, engineering, geologic sciences, geophysics, oceanography, atmospheric sciences, environmental sciences, etc.)

4) How did you decide which 'electives' to take?

   Follow-up: Was it more related to your major, general interest or secondary interest (e.g. minor)? How did you choose which 4th year courses to take?

5) How did you get information on the various course electives? Please be specific. (Examples: Course calendar, departmental website, academic advisor, instructors, other students/friends)

   Follow-up: What is the most important information source for deciding on a particular course? Was the information adequate? If not, how might we improve this?

6) Name one or more learning experience(s) that you valued the most while in EOS.

   Follow-up: Examples: Lectures, labs, group discussions, tutorials, field trips, field school, etc. Why was it so valuable?

7) What experience in the EOS program did you find least valuable? Why?

8) If you were involved in a field experience, please describe the impact it had on you. (Examples, if needed: field trips, mapping exercises, Bamfield/Oliver/Salt Spring Island field camps, etc.)

9) Did you experience a sense of community or membership within the EOS program?

   Follow-up: If so, please describe your experience. If not, please speculate on reasons why. What, if anything, could have enhanced a sense of community?

10) Was there anything in the program that inspired you and/or made you change your ideas about the world?

    Follow-up: How did the EOS academic program affect you and your outlook on life? Was there anything outside the EOS program but within the UBC community? What was the single most important thing you obtained from your EOS degree?