



Response Rate Cohort 2017: 1,027 Students

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
79%	64%	60%	56%	49%

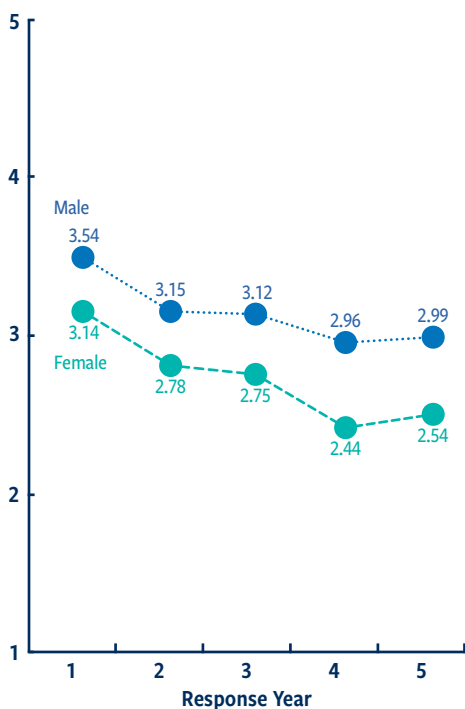
The **Michigan Doctoral Experience Study (MDES)** is an on-going study of the Ph.D. student experience at the University of Michigan. At its core, MDES aims to understand how students across the disciplines develop into scholars and researchers while also examining how the experiences of doctoral students impact mental health and well-being.

This report summarizes data for incoming students that began their doctoral work in fall 2017. These students were re-surveyed yearly at the beginning of each subsequent Fall semester.

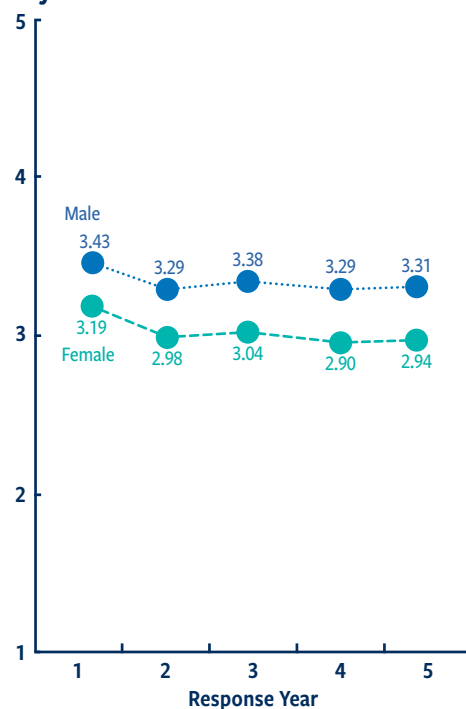
Doctoral Student Well-Being

Students assessed their level of well-being on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) at the beginning of the fall term. Stress was measured using the Perceived Stress Scale, which captures how often respondents feel overwhelmed by life demands over the past month. Data were collected from the same subjects over 5 years.

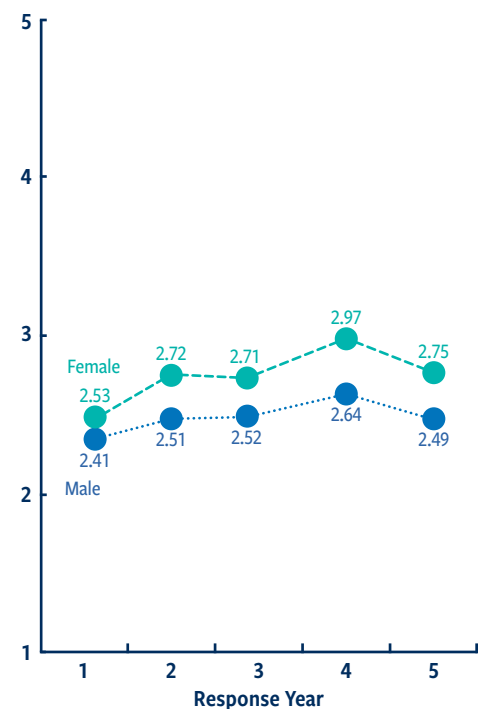
Mental



Physical

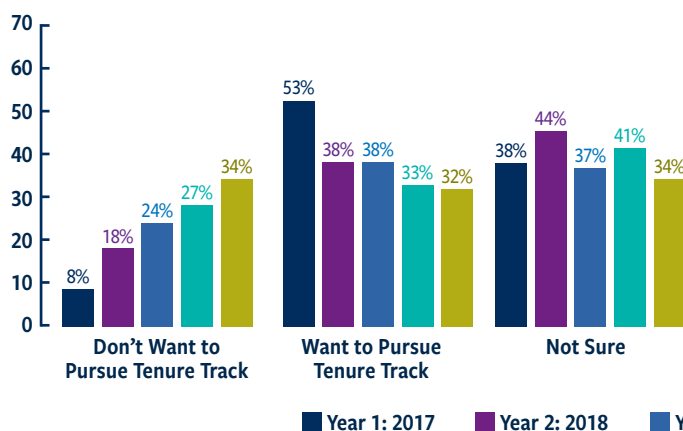


Stress



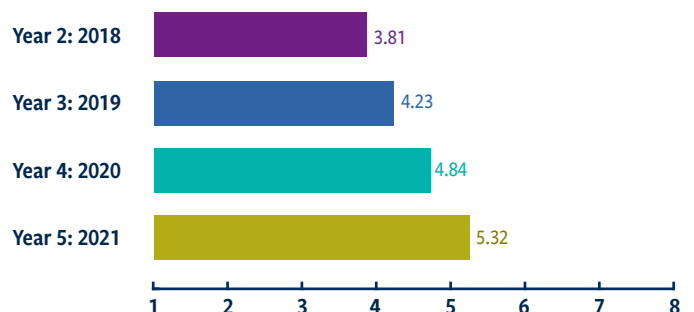
Tenure Track Career Plans

Students are asked yearly about their plans to pursue tenure-track faculty careers.



Disciplinary Development

Students are asked to assess their growth from knowledge consumers (1 on the scale) to knowledge producers (8 on the scale)





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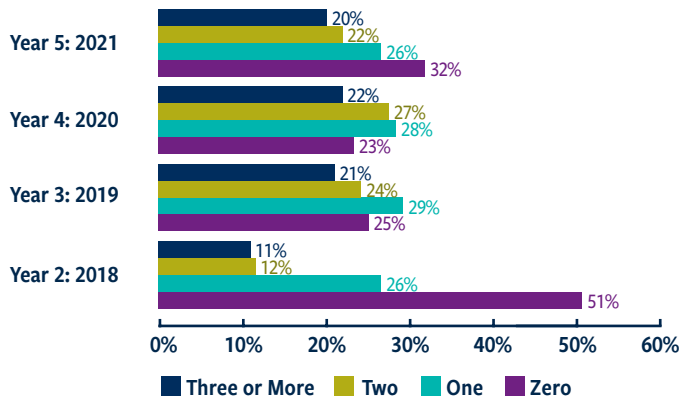
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After each year, students are asked to describe activities and experiences that happened during the previous academic year.

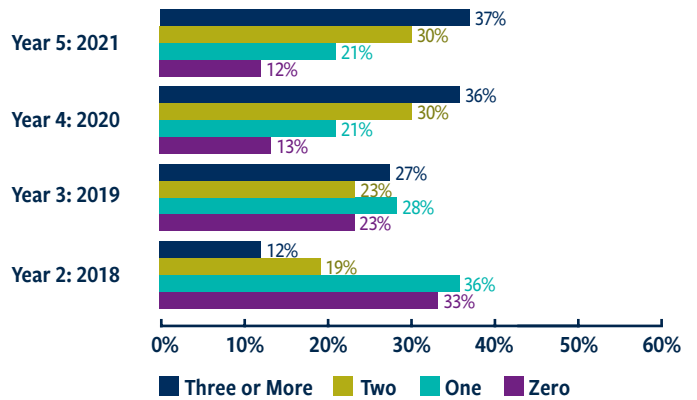
Scholarly Products Worked On

Students reported whether they participated in a range of activities that prepared them for careers as researchers and scholars, as well as how many products they worked on during each year of Ph.D. study.

Number of Conference Proposals

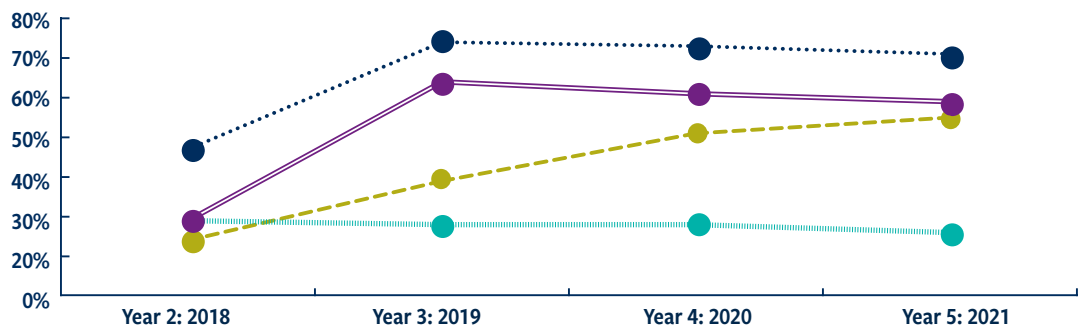


Number of Manuscripts Intended for Publication



Disciplinary Activities

- Presented at a conference in their discipline
- Published work in their discipline
- Attended a conference in their discipline
- Engaged in service to department



On Wanting to Quit

Students were asked to assess the frequency of ever thinking about permanently quitting in the past academic year. This scale runs from 1 (never) to 5 (everyday). Nearly 50% of respondents consistently report a desire to abandon their doctoral work at least a couple of times a year.

Data also revealed disciplinary differences in the frequency with which students considered quitting their doctoral programs. While the average frequency increased in every division of study, students in the biological and health sciences reported the lowest frequency of ever thinking about dropping out of the programs within each time point. In contrast, students in the humanities and the arts programs indicated the highest mean frequencies in the same periods.

Thoughts of Quitting Over Time (2017 Cohort)

