

## Student Response to Mentored Advanced Projects

### Survey Results:

- 63 students returned the survey.
- As expected, the more semesters a student had been enrolled, the more likely they were to have taken a MAP
- 36.5% of Respondents had taken or were taking a MAP, though in the Science division the number was much higher—67%.
- 42.5% of all students who had not taken a map cited “not having a chance” as the reason they had not taken one. 40% said they “Didn’t know about it.” Only 5% said they had been “discouraged by their advisor”.

### Select comments by those who had not taken a MAP on what would encourage them to take a MAP:

- “Enough time to do justice to not only it but my three other classes in any given upperclass-type-semester; a better working relationship with any of the professors in my department; a sense that some specific area of English interests me.”
- “I didn't and don't know much about MAPs. I've done two 4-credit independent studies and I got a lot out of them. I don't know what would be better about a MAP.”
- “More info in frosh and soph years.”
- “A easier system for initiating projects. Perhaps projects where professors come looking for students or where professors state a willingness to participate.”
- “If I had heard about something that sounded neat, my interest would definitely be piqued. If a professor had suggested something, or if a classmate had mentioned a good experience with one – but I honestly don’t think most students know what MAPs are and whether they’re available to us.”

### Comments from those who had taken a MAP on why it was unique:

- “The material covered in our seminar sessions is truly interdisciplinary and broad-ranging. I enjoy having the opportunity to move rapidly through a wide variety of material with the intent of focusing on a narrower body of knowledge during the MAP research project portion of the course.”

- “For one thing I was living in town rather than on campus since it was the summer. I was also able to attain a greater intimacy with the town itself instead of the campus bubble. The grant was nice, too. As I said I was able to choose my own topic and work one on one with my advisor without any other distractions, which never happens during the regular school year.”
- “It is like a higher level tutorial.”
- “More than any other class, my thesis prepared me for graduate level work, as it was more tailored to my interests and more focused on the production of the final written work than any other academic experience I've had at Grinnell. The close work with my two readers was unique to this experience, as was the intensity with which I was forced to approach the work.”
- “Through my MAP, I had the opportunity to explore a topic of interest to me, and I even got funding to travel to research it. This projects, unlike any class, allowed me to produce original research of actual academic value.”
- “The name is fancier, and it offered me more funding. I guess the funding was the main difference. It allowed me to conduct research which otherwise might have been unaffordable”
- “More independent, but also more interaction with faculty advisors, opportunity to do things (like go to Russia) that wouldn't be possible with a larger class, more focused and in depth study on a particular subject.”
- “As far as I can tell, I am just writing a thesis. The way things are going, I seem to be getting just as much advice as I received last semester while doing an independent study. This does not feel distinct from past experience in any way.”

#### Tentative Conclusions Based on Survey and SEPC Reports:

- Those who have taken a MAP were overwhelmingly positive.
- The uniqueness of the experience varied by department and by MAP. Some MAPs were distinct from other curricular components, others were not.
- Social Science and Humanities students had less over-all access to MAPs, but were still very positive about their experiences if they had taken a MAP.
- Few advisors actively discouraged students from taking MAPs.
- The Student Body as a whole probably does not have sufficient information concerning MAPs, and if regularized in the curriculum, substantial efforts should be made to disseminate information.