



DataBrief provides arts educators and arts policy makers with highlights of SNAAP data and insights into the value of arts-school education. Contact us for more information.

## The Institutional Experience: Sense of Belonging and Attachment

This brief draws upon data from the 65,837 arts alumni from 120 institutions (109 postsecondary institutions and 11 arts high schools) in the United States who responded to the SNAAP survey in 2011 and 2012.

One measure of institutional experience is the extent to which students feel that they fit in at their schools. We look at whether arts alumni say that they were satisfied ("very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied," versus "somewhat dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied") with their "sense of belonging and attachment" at their institutions. We draw comparisons between alumni of different races/ethnicities and genders, and alumni who attended different types of institutions.

Comparisons by race/ethnicity include only alumni who selected one racial/ethnic category and compare those who identify as White or Caucasian; Black or African American; Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin; and Asian.

### Do I Belong Here? Gender and Race

*Undergraduate SNAAP respondents from which racial/ethnic group are the **least likely** to be satisfied with their sense of belonging and attachment at their institutions? Black or African-American (69%)*

*Undergraduate SNAAP respondents from which racial/ethnic group are the **most likely** to be satisfied with their sense of belonging and attachment at their institutions? White (79%)*

Overall, undergraduate SNAAP respondents are happy with their sense of belonging and attachment at their arts schools - 78% say they are satisfied ("very" or "somewhat") with this aspect of their time at their institutions. Moreover, undergraduate women (78%) and men (79%) are about equally as likely to be satisfied with their sense of belonging and attachment.

On the other hand, SNAAP reveals racial differences in arts graduates' levels of satisfaction with belonging and attachment. Among undergraduate level alumni, White graduates are the most likely to be satisfied with this aspect of their time at their institutions (79%) and Black graduates are the least likely (69%). In comparison, 74% of Hispanics and 72% of Asians indicate satisfaction with this aspect of their time in school.

## Do I Belong Here? Differences by School Type

*Percentage of undergraduates attending **arts-focused institutions** who indicate satisfaction with their sense of belonging and attachment: 76%*

*Percentage of undergraduates attending **arts programs within comprehensive institutions** who indicate satisfaction with their sense of belonging and attachment: 78%*

One might expect that arts students who attend arts-focused schools, surrounded only by other artistic individuals, might feel more of a sense of belonging than their counterparts who attend comprehensive institutions. However, this is not the case. In fact, those who attend comprehensive institutions are very slightly *more* likely to feel they belong there. Seventy-six percent of undergraduate SNAAP respondents who attended schools focused on art, music and/or design are satisfied ("very" or "somewhat") with their sense of belonging and attachment at their institutions, compared to 78% of their counterparts who went to comprehensive master's or doctoral degree granting institutions.

Satisfaction with sense of belonging is a crucial measure for arts institutions to consider when implementing programs and curricula that will broadly meet the needs of all groups of students.

## 2013 SNAAP Survey: In Progress

On October 8th, the 2013 SNAAP survey opened to more than 400,000 arts graduates from 48 institutions. This is the largest pool of arts alumni to be eligible to take the survey in SNAAP's history, thanks to the participation of many large research universities. The survey closes November 22nd.

The 2013 Institutional Reports that SNAAP prepares for each school will include several exciting new components. First, institutions can now compare their own majors to equivalent majors from other institutions. In prior years, the comparison group selections by arts discipline were limited to groups of majors, such as "performing arts" or "art and design." Now, schools can break out their comparison groups by just music, theater, or dance - or by nearly 80 other major fields. This will allow institutions to compare apples to apples...or graphic design alumni to graphic design alumni.

Second, the data of the 2013 SNAAP respondents will be combined with those from 2011 and 2012, creating an unprecedented and rich database of the educational experiences and career paths of North America's arts graduates.



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