



**The IGERT Program Evaluation:
A Focus Group Study on IGERT Faculty Experiences**

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Introduction

This report is the result of one assessment in a larger study designed to evaluate Maryland's IGERT program in language science. The evaluation seeks to determine the effectiveness of the program in terms of its goals and obtain information that offers insights into the components which appear most beneficial, and those that could be refined to enhance the program's impact. The program evaluation is led by the Director of Assessment in Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment (IRPA) and her graduate assistant.

Focus groups allow evaluators to explore salient issues for participants by providing the opportunity for them to express their thoughts, opinions, and experiences in their own words. On May 13, 2010, program evaluators conducted a focus group study of faculty affiliated with the IGERT program. The focus group was designed to capture data on faculty experiences with IGERT (frequency and type of involvement), perception of IGERT's impact on creating/sustaining interdisciplinary graduate research opportunities, the IGERT program management, IGERT's impact on the faculty experience (interdisciplinary goals, satisfaction), and the most and least helpful aspects of the IGERT program (See Appendix for protocol).

It should be noted that the data provided in this report are perceptions that participants have of their experience with IGERT, regardless of whether the perceptions are based in fact. As always, caution should be used not to generalize qualitative data beyond this focus group.

Methods

Program evaluators, in consultation with the IGERT administrators, formed the research team responsible for the protocol development, data collection, and analyses in the focus group study.

The focus group protocol was vetted by program evaluators and IGERT program leadership to ensure questions were 1) clear and understandable, 2) broad, non-leading, and open-ended, and 3) would capture the range of issues. Questions were ordered, prioritized, and assigned approximate time limits for discussion based on their complexity and importance. The focus group was designed to run approximately 90 minutes. A focus group script including information about the confidentiality of the session and informed consent form were also developed as per IRB agreement.

Data Collection

IGERT faculty members were invited to participate via email. All faculty members who responded and could attend the entire focus group were selected to participate.

The focus group was staffed by two trained research team members and was audio recorded. One served as a discussion facilitator and the other served as a note-taker. The protocol was followed to ensure that all topics were covered. The facilitator began by reading a script to communicate necessary information about the discussion. Attendees were informed of the confidentiality of the session, and asked to sign a consent form if they had not previously done so. After the audio recordings were started, the facilitator began the discussion.

Data Analysis

After the completion of the focus group, the audio recording was transcribed by student employees in the IRPA office. The transcription was verified by a second student employee. The data were then analyzed by the research team using qualitative procedures. One evaluator analyzed the data collected from the focus group, first by reading the transcript and generating a list of common themes. Each theme was assigned a code. A second evaluator audited the analyses and then assigned each comment to a code and in some cases multiple codes.

Participants

Eleven faculty members participated in the focus group. Participants in the focus group were a diverse and representative group, including two from Linguistics, two from hearing and speech sciences, two from human development, two representing UMD language centers and institutes, and one member from each psychology, second language acquisition, and computer science. The majority of participants were currently or had previously been members of IGERT's executive board. Each represented various levels of faculty rank, and some had more administrative roles at the time.

Results

The results presented below follow three main themes: Experiences and involvement with IGERT, the impact IGERT had on interdisciplinary studies for individuals, departments and the university, and lastly, feedback on IGERT programs and administration.

Experiences with IGERT

When participants were asked about their experiences and involvement with IGERT, their responses focused on their initial involvement, involvement with IGERT students, and the barriers to faculty involvement.

Faculty Involvement

Most faculty agreed that their involvement started with personal and intentional outreach from Colin Phillips. However, involvement differed across disciplines; some were more involved with students (e.g. teaching courses, advising), whereas others were more involved on the administrative side (e.g. reviewing applicants, executive committee, grant writing). For those in Linguistics, most were involved with the grant writing process. In general, the group showed high levels of involvement and recognized that their experiences and perceptions are not representative of all affiliate faculty members.

- I'm involved almost every day. I taught a class with [two other participants]...and generally just do all of the activities.
- I think there is a half dozen of us who have been on the executive committee, this is a bit unbalanced in some sense because there are... the executive committee is more highly represented in this group...

Experiences with Students

Despite their initial involvement with IGERT, faculty often felt that students pushed them to get involved, and other times faculty pushed students to get involved. Regardless of the impetus, participants felt that their involvement with IGERT had been beneficial for them personally and

professionally. Participants spoke of the following involvements: Teaching courses and seminars, facilitating lab groups, attending Thursday lunches, participating in a reading group, serving on student committees, participating in Winter Storm, serving as academic advisors, and connecting with students informally on campus.

- So, as I got involved last year, one of the first things that happened...I was asked to participate in Winter Storm. As a speaker, I have since had students who have been more heavily involved in the program...
- They enjoy so much, to some degree students push me a little further too. To be more active, and I will support them.

Due to varying levels of student interaction, some faculty did not know students personally, whereas others knew every student. The 'types' of students faculty work with also varied. They worked with affiliate students, IGERT funded students, those applying for IGERT funding, or no students at all (often a combination of these types).

- Yeah I have a student who is applying and actually close to revising her proposal, and I have three other students who are affiliate students.
- I don't have a student who is doing the program, there is no advisee of mine. Although, I wish there were. Every year I send potential recruits over here to try to get them to come to Maryland but I haven't succeeded.
- I don't have any students, well if I do they aren't my students per se that are being supported by the IGERT, but I try to interact with them. I taught a course... but I don't think I met the students outside of the department who took that course because they turned out to be the same ones in the department so I knew them anyhow. But I go to the Thursday lunches if I can and to the Winter Storm, and then just tidbits in the halls, you know, to hear what they're working on and what they're talking about.
- I know all of the students. And, that's in part from going to the Thursday lunches, having them in our class, seeing their applications. I guess because I do so many pieces of it, I seem to know them all.

Barriers to Involvement

Although the participants were very involved with IGERT, they shared varying perceptions about the reasons other faculty members were not involved. Some felt that certain departments provide structural constraints:

- ...I mean the other issue is that some departments, like ours, are heavily prescribed in what we have to do to stay accredited. So it is a little more difficult to pony up resources... [for certain programs] it's not so much a lack of desire to commit, but they have other things they need to be doing and there isn't as much flexibility person-wise or economically to do it.
- I think that in some departments it's very easy to get by and to teach a course. In other departments it may not be as easy because you are needed to teach other things... it is harder than in some other department. In Linguistics the chair is involved, so it's never going to be, "Oh no you can't teach that," or less likely to be. In other departments it's "What do you mean, we have 80,000 of our own students beating down our doors. You're not going to teach a seminar that lets in people who don't have the same background as everybody else in our department, it's not going to happen."

Most agree that faculty might be inundated with course loads, advising load, or research endeavors:

- I think the number one problem is faculty are really busy doing lots of different things. Even sometimes when you mean to go do things it becomes very difficult because you don't have the time. You get distracted and pulled and grants due next week, I can't go to a talk, that sort of thing. I think that is a substantial factor. It's not a lack of interest, support, or enthusiasm that would be my guess for what a substantial reason would be.
- And I think the time issue is not even one of not feeling that you need to help out in the program, I think for some people there literally is no time. It's in conflict or it's just impossible to do.

By contrast, some respondents felt that faculty participate when necessary, regardless of other obligations, and that this is not a concern.

- Things are, as far as I can tell anyway, humming along. There's less motivation to jump in and help when you think the thing doesn't need much more help. ... people will sort of chip in if asked but quite honestly I think a lot of times there's not much of a need to jump in all over the place.
- My impression is that some faculty participated on a sort of on-demand basis. So when a student has a need, they go talk to that person and they help out. Maybe that's the end of that interaction but it was a very valuable contribution.
- ...many are sympathetic and most [faculty] do the things they can do, and some are doing a lot more because their own research is involved in particular aspects of the IGERT program.
- ...[we] have been aiming really high, and I think we have to think about the value of activities at...broadening but not giving 24/7 because in terms of impact through this university, if we restrict it to people who can give 24/7, we're always going to be very small.

Related to this conversation, a discussion emerged around the incongruent perceptions of faculty involvement as viewed by students and faculty. In general, most faculty members did not see faculty participation as a problem, whereas participants felt that students did see a problem:

- ...there seems to be a disconnect here. The students think there isn't much faculty involvement, and the students particularly in the Linguistics field feel there isn't a lot of involvement outside of Linguistics. They think that the Linguistics faculty are involved but they are not getting a lot of involvement outside of that, so if the students think there is a problem, and the faculty don't think there is a problem, then there is a problem at least in the disconnect.
- The faculty needs to be involved, and the people need to be promoting it, need to be making their students aware and be supportive. But this program is precisely to empower the students to take control of their graduate education.
- [I overheard] ...one of the students said something about...she looked out over the audience and pointed out that there were more people listed as IGERT faculty than show dynamic interaction with the program.

IGERT's Impact

When asked about the impact IGERT had on interdisciplinary studies, participants felt that IGERT provided value for faculty, students, and departments. Additionally, a few participants spoke about the impact IGERT had on the university community at large and the lack of attention brought to IGERT's success.

Impact on Faculty

Some faculty commented that their involvement with IGERT pushed them in new directions, in terms of research interest. More often, participants felt that IGERT had impacted their awareness and appreciation of interdisciplinary research at the university.

- I would like to say positively about the IGERT that, although it is mainly for the students, I have gotten a lot out of the last couple years myself. And I think a lot of other faculty have.
- ...it [IGERT] has brought a heavier burden on being an advisor because I have several more appointees to focus on, but it also brings projects, interest and discussions. So it's got its pros and cons, but I embrace it.
- I have a student who is in the IGERT program and is getting way outside her comfort zone to do the computational things which I had always known was important for my research but I'm either too old or too lazy to actually learn how to do. And to have a student who is actually able to learn that fresh, and make the connection between the things I know are important about that, make that happen, has been a tremendous asset of IGERT.

Other faculty members attributed IGERT's success to the already strong interdisciplinary community at the university, prior to receiving the grant.

- As many of us here are also involved in other cross-disciplinary programs...I think this is true of IGERT... The notion of it is that it bootstrapped itself onto already existing cross-disciplinary structures but I also think that it is reflective of the people that are here around this table are heavily involved in those cross-disciplinary activities. So it's basically driven by those who find it necessary and important to formulate these interdisciplinary outreach programs and sustain them.
- I think it's ironic perhaps that the group was given the IGERT because it seems such a fertile environment in which to do it, that also means there are usually lots of relevant things going on on campus either in terms of work commitment or competing talks. At exactly the same time.

Impact on Students

Rather than speaking to their own success, more often faculty commented on student success. Students have participating in rotations with other departments, acquired the necessary resources to extend their studies outside of the university, integrated their perspectives in various disciplines, and gained the skills necessary for their professional development.

- It's been great that my student has been able to go to [another department] and do a rotation there which is something I would have had a hard time, if I was funding her on my grant, having her spend half of her time someplace else.

- He [a student] managed to throw together a bunch of techniques that I wouldn't have been able to help him with. We found funding that will send him off to do field work in [another country]. He'd love that... I think he did work that we would not have been able to have him do had there not been this. And I learned a lot from helping supervise some of it.
- So it has enabled him, and not only has he learned a lot of things especially in Linguistics, I mean he's learned things even [our other] students don't get to learn about by taking some of these courses in Linguistics in this IGERT program. But, it's just the context and whole viewpoint that this is a legitimate area of research. It's shaped his PhD work. It's just changed what this guy is doing. I'm not sure how common that is, but it's something that has had a big impact on this guy's life. It's been extremely useful.
- ...And she learned so much! I could see the growth just over the process of revising her proposal for the full participant fellowship, and I learned a lot too. She brought a lot of information from her meetings with other experts and brought additional readings that she's reading, and I feel that even for me and particularly for the student's growth, even at the beginning stage of her research I think it's just great.

Beyond the classroom and research, faculty recognized students' marketable experiences due to their programmatic and leadership involvement with IGERT activities:

- ...they're [students] also learning that it's not so easy to put together a program and have communications across different disciplinary positions. So I think they are getting really well prepared at knowing not just what you should do and what you can do, but what's hard to do and how you overcome those challenges.
- ... these are the sorts of things [community outreach, mentoring], assisting with grant proposals, they are actually trying to write grant proposals, this is all extremely valuable and will set them apart.
- There is some sort of mentoring, given that a lot of these [students] are going to become faculty soon, the fact that they got, some of them, have gone to the high school and done talks at Winter Storm with the kids coming on to campus, but also now mentoring each other with their applications.
- They learn how to run things. Their being asked to run things all the time, and we don't think of it as part of a graduate education that we teach someone how to run something, but it turns out that may be one of the more important things that their learning, and they're really running things.
- Students begin serving as consultants for each other, supports collaboration, they are helping each other solve problems in the labs, and it turns into a "consulting base".

Impact on Department/University

Participants felt strengthened connections across departments due to interdisciplinary initiatives, specifically interdisciplinary faculty hires and additional departmental support for interdisciplinary research because of student success.

- I think there's also been one programmatic shift that's happened because of IGERT, and that is that the departments that I'm with came to see computation as a way of trying to knit together the various sub-units across the campus. So if you asked yourself what we studied within my department, well we're not studying exactly what people are studying in other departments but we found by having to put this thing together, sort of a level of

vocabulary that people could use across these which would enable them to talk to one another.

- And I think it's very good, I think the campus is gonna be immeasurably strengthened by these hires [faculty hires who have an interdisciplinary focus] and so will the IGERT program actually.
- [Students success] certainly helped make what's going on with this [IGERT] more legitimate with other faculty in our department. There's this program that is supporting this guy, it must be real! It's unusual to see something like that.

Another participant attributed specific accomplishments, such as the yield of accepted students, to the strong interdisciplinary focus at the University of Maryland as compared to peer institutions.

- As far as I can see [my department is] getting the best students. Almost everybody we offer. We offered six places this time, we get lots of applications, and we only lost one. And I know that the same students we accepted are accepted at [another university] at a couple of the other leading programs, so I think because we are going narrower and the areas of IGERT happen to be the areas of strength on the campus, that's one of the reasons why we're able to pull people...

Participants were also asked about departmental alignment with IGERT goals, most reported progress towards such alignment, whereas, individuals from the Linguistics department synonymously reported concrete alignment with IGERT's goals.

- ...we do have the goal of strengthening connections to other strong units on campus and that's an important thing, and I think its begun to happen in [my department]. I think there is a long way to go, but I think that there are some students and I think that it is working and that is a positive sign
- Well, the goal for [my department] was to get itself out into other campus activities and visions. When I got here, it was a pretty insular little place. So I would say it fit very well with what we wanted to do and helped us do what we wanted to do in ways we probably couldn't help ourselves do.
- My department chair is very supportive for faculty members to get out of the department and to meet faculty members.

Faculty members believed that IGERT had positively impacted the community, but there were differing perspectives on the recognition of this impact, specifically from the university administration.

- It seems to me that there is not an awareness of how incredible this is. I would say that my end of the campus is a little numb to what's going on. I think there's tremendous potential in computer science, bioengineering, engineering in general....
- I think they know there is something strong here, but I don't think they appreciate that they have more than something that is strong. They have something that may be among the best in the world. If they play the cards right, if you want to study language in an intelligent way, this may be the place to do it.

Programmatic Feedback

Most Effective Programs

Faculty mentioned several specific activities that had been helpful for interdisciplinary studies, including overwhelming support for Winter Storm and lab rotations.

- I think both of those, for a lot of students that are on the fringes, that aren't doing the lab rotations because they aren't supported directly. Winter Storm and the regular meetings are especially helpful. But I think that having students come into my lab and tell me they need my input on this project from a faculty perspective, that's pretty important.
- I'd like to say something about the Winter Storm. The infrastructure, the wiki for instance... it's the kind of thing where you can still get something out of it even if you can't be there 24/7. Now clearly I think that the interaction at the Winter Storm is invaluable and I wouldn't want to denigrate it. But I think the fact that there is not just something that is going on but it's recorded, maintained, kept as a resource.
- I still remember walking into the first R class in the Winter Storm and seeing somewhere between 45 and 60 people sitting with their laptops there. And they come for two weeks to go through this course that has been well organized. I mean, this was, in my opinion, flabbergasting. And not only did they go through it, but it had, as far as I can tell, a lasting impact on everything our students do now. There's not a single paper that goes out without R-based statistics on it...
- ...the feedback I get is mostly through the students. I haven't heard many negative comments about the program or the application process, I've heard only positive things. I agree that the Winter Storm seems to be a very effective piece of the program.

Least Effective Programs and Recommendations

Suggestions were made for activities that participants felt were less effective, such as Thursday lunches, research groups from Winter Storm, and the student committee structure.

- [Regarding the replacement of CNL with the Thursday lunches]...it would be nice if there was a place again where what we think of as stellar interdisciplinary work by people who are really doing would come and talk to people so you could hear examples of it. So not only a practice venue. And I expect that will change, but that was my impression of what happened. The CNL substituting the IGERT lunches for the CNL was not a universal gain. Although I understand why it happened.
- No it's not surprising that most don't work [research groups from Winter Storm], but it's the case that most don't work. Maybe one could plan...if there was more thoughtful planning about the content of the research projects in advance maybe they would work better.
- ...it would be nice for the students to have titles for what they are doing when they are putting all of this stuff together... Somehow having titles, coordinator, director, whatever, does make it clearer to them that they aren't donkeying around as much as they are being given an education that's valuable in and of itself, not just the content of the Winter Storm. But the process of holding the Winter Storm, organizing the Winter Storm.

Administration Feedback

When asked about the program administration, most participants felt things improved since Csilla started working for IGERT, specifically in regards to communication. However, some

reflected on previous experiences where communication had been problematic: Announcing students who received funding and communicating Winter Storm logistics with the executive committee.

- I think that the process of applying for the IGERT was much stronger this year and much weaker year one. I think that was something that wasn't effective and I think that we fixed, but as a result the first year application process was far less effective than the second year process.
- ...made even easier now with the adoption/hiring of a half-time person in a role of taking on some of the work. But I think that the PR has been just superb throughout, including communications. I mean I get e-mails, and I always have, almost guaranteed wake up in the morning and there's the latest one. They are very well written, absolutely to the point, I have no complaints at all. I think the communication has been good from the get-go.
- Well, I think there have been a few communication missteps unfortunately, I say there was never a formal announcement of congratulations for all of the students who were accepted into the IGERT program so that the people who were already involved don't know who got awarded. Or who is a member of IGERT and who's not... I think there are some places where communication has been great, and other places where... I think for Winter Storm I know that I just kind of assumed I would hear about the Winter Storm schedule because I'm the executive committee, how would I not know? But apparently because I didn't e-mail... So there was some places that I felt there was some communication gaps.

Summary

- Participants report being involved in various capacities: Serving on the executive committee, teaching courses/seminars, facilitating lab groups, attending Thursday lunches, participating in a reading group, serving on student committees, participating in Winter Storm, and serving as academic advisors.
- Participants recognized barriers to involvement such as department obligations and work-load constraints.
- Many participants felt that the level of involvement from faculty members is adequate and that a range of involvement is appropriate and necessary for IGERT's success.
- Participants felt that IGERT had positively impacted student's ability to conduct interdisciplinary research, both within the university and outside of the university.
- Participants noted additional skills acquired by students outside of the classroom: mentoring one another, writing grants, leading groups, and learning how to communicate effectively across departments.
- Participants noticed improvements in cross-departmental relationships and the level of interdisciplinary research being conducted at the university.
- Some participants were concerned that the university administration was not recognizing the impact and importance of IGERT at the University of Maryland.
- Participants felt that events like Winter Storm and lab rotations are extremely helpful in advancing students understanding of interdisciplinary research, they also found Thursday lunches and reading groups to be helpful.
- Participants felt that program administration had improved, but there were still concerns about communication with students.

Appendix: Protocol

Focus Group Protocol

Topics of Interest

- Experiences with IGERT (frequency and type of involvement)
 - IGERT impact on creating/sustaining interdisciplinary research opportunities
 - IGERT program management
 - IGERT impact on the faculty experience (interdisciplinary goals, satisfaction)
 - General feedback (most and least helpful aspects of the IGERT program)
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Description of the IGERT Program and Its Goals

The IGERT program is an interdisciplinary program in Biological and Computational Foundations of Language Diversity, which is supported by the National Science Foundations prestigious Integrative Graduate Education and Research Training (IGERT) program. The IGERT program is designed for highly motivated students who seek broad interdisciplinary training that is not normally available within an individual program. The IGERT program's main goal is to strengthen the language science community at University of Maryland by offering students and faculty venues and resources for interdisciplinary training and collaborative research.

Focus Group Script

Hello, my name is _____. I am _____ (TELL BRIEFLY WHO YOU ARE HERE AT UM). I will be moderating our discussion today about your experiences in the IGERT program. This is my colleague _____ who will be taking notes. (EITHER INTRODUCE THE NOTE TAKER, OR LET THEM INTRODUCE THEMSELVES.) I'm going to read the following information from a script to ensure that I communicate all of the necessary information about our discussion. Many of you may be very familiar with the IGERT program. I will read a brief description of the program and its goals [READ ABOVE DESCRIPTION OF IGERT PROGRAM AND GOALS]

This is a focus group, which is a research method useful for gaining information about a topic in a comfortable environment. As participants we ask you to maintain the confidentiality of today's discussion and not share the content with anyone outside the focus group. With your permission, we will be tape recording the session so that the notes will accurately reflect the conversation. Your identity will be kept confidential. We will summarize all of the focus groups, no names included, and present our findings, again no names included, to the IGERT program staff. The IGERT program leadership may also present results to agencies funding the project and members of the academic community.

Now I would like you to write your first name on both sides of the card in front of you. These are the names we will use to talk with each other during today's session, but will not be recorded with the focus group data: we will use only the numbers on your card to protect confidentiality.

In order for this to be a productive session, we ask that you speak clearly and one at a time, and that you think about the questions and answer candidly. Keep in mind you don't have to answer every question. While at times you may disagree with the comments made by others, we ask that you respect their right to say what they think. We also want to acknowledge that you have likely seen the student focus group report or heard about the results. It is important that you try to set aside those opinions. We would like this focus group to reflect your own responses and opinions, regardless of what you have heard from the student focus group. At this point, if you would like to leave and not participate in the focus group, feel free to do so now. [IF ANYONE GETS UP, THANK THEM FOR THEIR TIME.]

This focus group is a part of a larger study to assess the effectiveness of the IGERT program. As NSF states, IGERT is an "experiment in graduate education", and participating in the assessment process is an important part of the educational research effort.

At this point, I will distribute a consent form about the IGERT assessment project. [DISTRIBUTE CONSENT FORM AND GIVE TIME TO READ AND SIGN]. If you feel comfortable doing so, sign the form indicating that you understand the purpose and procedure of the IGERT assessment, and that you agree to participate. If you have any questions about this study, we can be reached through the person in charge of this project, Sharon La Voy. Sharon's contact information is included on the consent form. [HAVE PARTICIPANTS RETURN SIGNED INFORMED CONSENT FORMS. IF ANYONE DOES NOT WANT TO SIGN, AND CHOOSES TO LEAVE, THANK THEM FOR THEIR TIME.]

At this time, I will start the tape and we will begin our discussion. We will begin by asking each of you to state the name you have written on the card and the name of your academic department and program.

3:40pm
(20 mins)

1. Please tell us about your involvement in the IGERT program.
 - a. *How did you get involved with IGERT?*
 - b. *Which IGERT activities have you been involved with? How frequently have you been involved?*
 - c. *How many students have you been involved with in the IGERT program and in what capacity did you work with them?*
 - d. *Have there been any challenges or barriers to you or your colleagues' involvement with IGERT?*

4:00pm
(15 mins)

2. The next questions will discuss how IGERT has impacted your ability or your students' abilities to conduct interdisciplinary research.
 - a. *Have you been involved with advising or assisting any student interdisciplinary research teams, cross-departmental courses, or other cross-department activities since you began your involvement with IGERT? If so, please describe your experience with these teams.*
 - b. *Even if you haven't yet worked with a research team, how have you helped students to broaden their understanding of interdisciplinary research?*
 - c. *Which IGERT activities were most and least effective in helping students learn to conduct interdisciplinary language research?*

d. *Has IGERT impacted your own research agenda? How?*

4:15pm
(15 mins)

3. The next questions will discuss how IGERT has affected your academic program.
- Can you describe how IGERT has fit into your goals with your home department?*
 - How has your participation in IGERT activities influenced the students in your program?*
 - How has your participation in IGERT activities influenced the climate or norms in your program?*
 - What has been the overall faculty involvement from your program in IGERT?*

4:30pm
(10 mins)

4. How effective has the IGERT program administration been with respect to communication, coordinating activities, and management of the overall program?
- What suggestions do you have for better facilitation of the program?* [PROBE: HOW COULD STUDENTS DO A BETTER JOB WITH FACILITATION? FACULTY? IGERT LEADERSHIP?]
 - How do you feel about your (and other faculty's) ability to contribute to program initiatives?*

4:40pm
(15 mins)

5. THINKING ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES OVERALL WITH THE IGERT PROGRAM, WHAT HAS BEEN MOST AND LEAST EFFECTIVE? [IF RESPONDENTS ONLY ANSWER MOST OR LEAST, PROBE FOR THE OTHER SIDE]
- Do you have any suggestions for improving the program?* [PROBE: HAVE YOU FOUND THE PROGRAM TO BE DOMINATED BY ONE PARTICULAR DEPARTMENT? IF SO, HOW HAS THIS AFFECTED YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH IGERT?]

4 :55pm
(5 mins)

6. Before we conclude today's discussion, is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your experiences with the IGERT program?

Thank you for participating in today's discussion, your insights have been extremely valuable. As a reminder, we ask you to maintain the confidentiality of today's discussion and not share the content with anyone outside the focus group. Before you leave, if you feel comfortable doing so, please write your academic department and program on the inside of your name card to help us in our analysis of the group's discussion.