IST Residential Master's Graduation Process

R620 Process Mapping Project

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1. INTRODUCTION

Graduation is reflecting the students' capstone of their study. After studying for several years, it is time for students to go through their graduation. The graduation process itself differs from one university to another and from one department to another department within a university. Sometimes it can be easy, but sometimes it can be a long and confusion process.

Annisa Sari and Susan Suh are second year of IST residential master's student in IST. We are also experiencing graduation process right now. Thus, in order to complete the process mapping assignment for R620 course, we chose IST residential master's graduation process. In addition, we also chose this topic because there were some concerns that have been arose informally amongsome current IST master's students that the graduation process would be confusing form them. Some student said that they did not know the deadline to submit the program of studies form, did not know that they should complete an instructional project as one of graduation requirements, did not know what the requirements for graduation, etc. Therefore, we, Annisa Sari and Susah Suh consider that this project would be very beneficial to identify what kind of issues that arise during the IST residential master's graduation process.

2. AIM AND SCOPE

The aim of this process-mapping project is to depict a graduation process of residential IST master's students and highlight bottlenecks and potential areas where performance might be an issue.

The IST residential master's graduation process is not only involving IST department, but also involving the graduate office. However, due to the time limitation to do this project, we decided to focus on what is going on in the IST department because most of the IST residential master's graduation process is related to the IST department.

3. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Because this study is focused on thegraduation process of residential IST master's students of School of Education at Indiana University Bloomington that is the organization where the authors are in, it would be relatively easy to access to the data with various data collection methods.We reviewed documents, conducted interview/survey, reflected our first-hand experiences, and had informal conversation with some of the IST residential master's students.

Document Review:

1. We reviewed official IST web site to obtain information of graduation process.
2. We reviewed a brochure and the blue book issued by IST department that contains information of general information of Master's program.

Interview:

In order to obtain information to accurately depict the graduation process, we interviewed four people who are involved in the graduation process. They are:

1. Dr. Frick, the chair of IST Department
2. Dr. Haynes, an assistant professor in IST Department,a member of the Portfolio Committees
3. Sarah Childers, an administrative staff in IST Department
4. Susan Sloffer, the director of Matriculation, Enrollment and Records of School of Education at IUB

The questions that we asked are listed in Appendix A.

Survey:

We conducted a survey toward IST Mater's students who are in residential degree program to figure out the degree of knowledge and information of graduation process that they possess. 9 students participated in the survey. The results of survey will be showed in Appendix B.

First-hand Experiences:

As a residential Master's student in IST, Annisa Sari and Susan Suh reflected our own experiences and perceptions about graduation process in the project.

Informal conversation with some of the IST residential master's students:

SinceAnnisa Sari and Susan Suh, who conduct this project, are also IST residential master's students; thus,we hadopportunities to talk with IST Master's students' about the graduation process. It was very useful to determine the problems related to the process from the student perspective.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

- The description of IST department: IST department is intended to prepare practitioners and researchers in education and training settings to build and test processes, products, systems and services. This department offers master and doctoral programs, and is located under the school of Education in IUB.
- The objectives of IST Master's Program is assist individuals pursuing to be practitioners in the filed of instructional technology.
- Duration of Residential IST Master's Program to complete 36 minimum credit hours is 1.5 – 7 years.

5. TARGET AUDIENCE

The Graduation Process analysis involves people who are currently and/or will be involved in the IST Department at Indiana University. The following is the possible audience:

- Future students who are planning to apply for the residential IST Master's Degree Program
- Current Students in the IST Department
- Board of Trustees of IUB
- President and Vice President of IUB
- Faculty & Administrative Staffs in the IST Department
- IUB Graduate Office

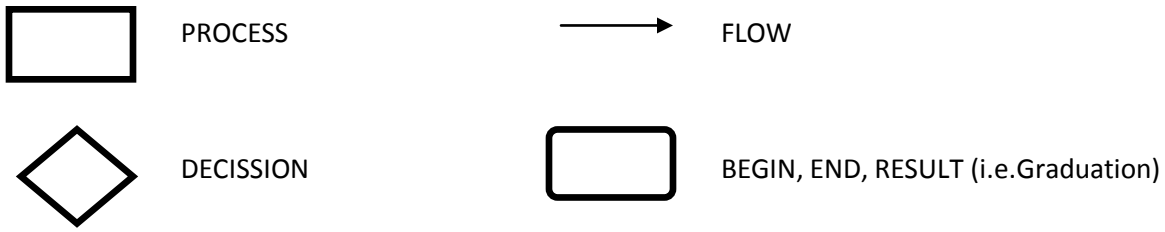
6. REQUIREMENTS AND PRE-REQUISITES

Requirements and pre-requisites to be accepted into the IST residential Master's degree program:

Minimum Requirements	Pre-requisites
1. Application 2. A baccalaureate degree 3. Minimum undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 4. If graduate work has been taken, a minimum GPA of 3.3 5. GRE (combined verbal and math 900 + 3.5 analytical writing) 6. Two letters of recommendation 7. A Personal goal statement 8. (International students) TOEFL score of 600 in PBT test or 250 score in CBT test or 100 in IBT test.	Computer Competency: Macintosh and DOS/Windows operating systems, word processing, graphics, a general theoretical understanding of how computers work, electronic mail, file transfer, information retrieval, scanning and Web publishing.

7. FINDINGS

Based on the document review, interviews, and first-hand experiences, we were able to describe the graduation process of IST residential master's students using flowchart (Figure 1). This figure is illustrating the current graduation process. While reading our flowchart, please use this description below to translate the meaning of our flowchart symbols:



Based on the survey results, informal conversation with some of the IST residential master's students and interviews with faculty and staffs, we identified some issues that would emerge in the graduation process (Figure 2). The issues that we identified are as below:

Issue 1. Some students do not sufficiently communicate with their advisor to get some advice for their classes. In addition, some faculty do not mention about program of studies in the first meeting at the orientation day. Thus, some students did not informed that they should complete a program of studies form while they will take courses.

Issue 2. Some students do not know that they should apply for graduation by the deadlines. In this case, their names will be missed in the commencement program. In fact, the graduate office send the notification emails to students letting them know about the deadline for application for graduation but many of them do not give much attention to the emails and ignore it.

Issue 3. Most of students are not aware of the fact that they should get an instructional project certificate to graduate. In cases that any IST core courses did not handle the instructional project and a student did not know that until they are close to graduate, it would cause a serious problem.

8. CONCLUSION

Based on our findings, we concluded that there are two main reasons for some confusion about graduation process that some IST Master's students have been experienced.

First, it is difficult to find all information necessary to complete graduation process on place such as IST department web site or IUB web site. Students need to visit several web pages to obtain information that they need. In some cases, information on the web was insufficient; for example, students had difficulty finding information about the deadline for program of studies or how to get Instructional Project Certificate. Consequently, they had to individually contact with IST faculty/staffs or other personnel in the graduate office.

Second, some students are not adequately interacting with their advisor to get information of their courses or requirements for the graduation. In addition, some of them did not pay attention to their graduation process until they are close to graduate. They expected that their advisors would come to them to provide information rather than they come to visit their advisor ask some advices.

Finally, we recommend that further project to be conducted to determine possible solutions to the issues that we have found from this project.

Figure 1. The Current Graduation Process of IST Residential Master's Students

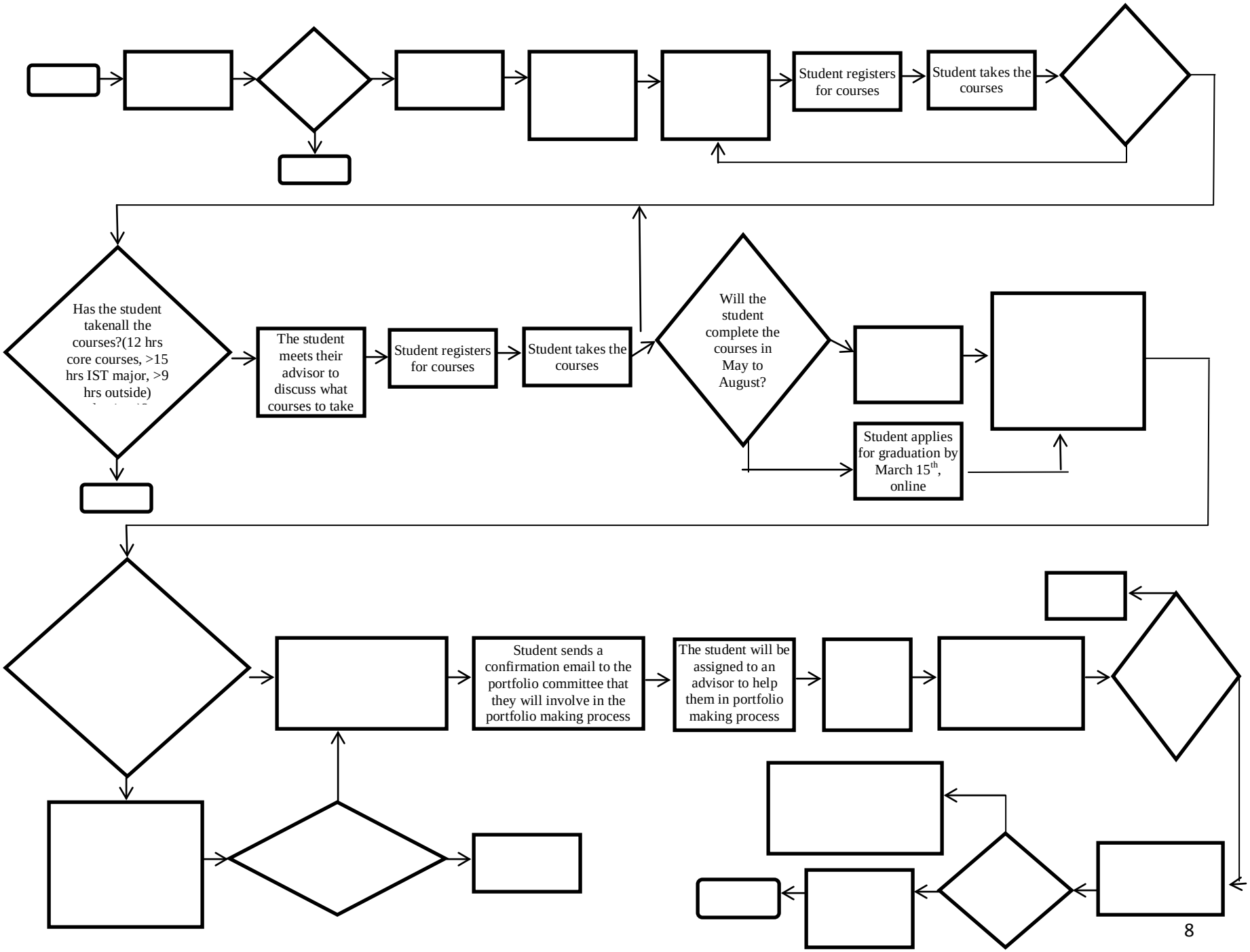
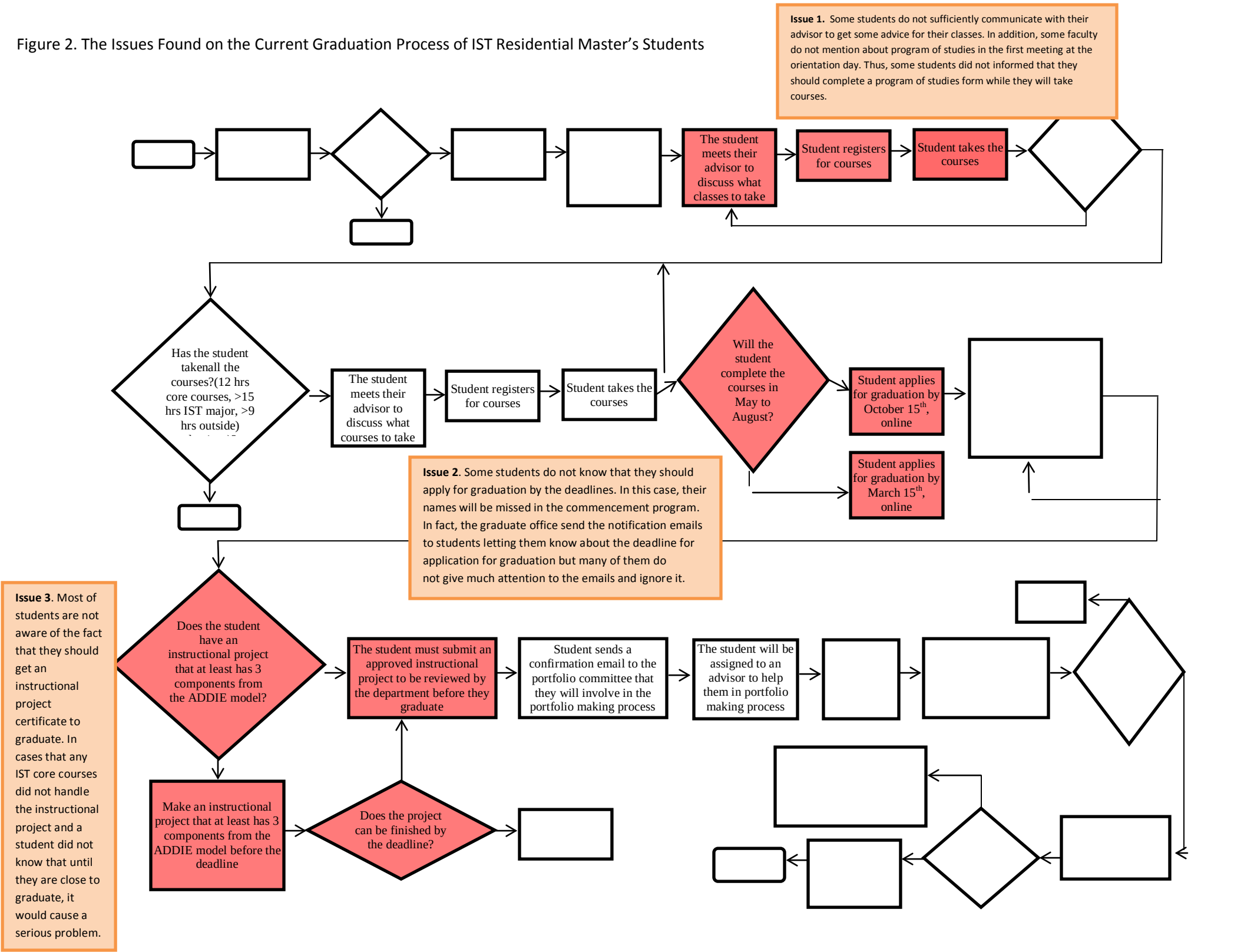


Figure 2. The Issues Found on the Current Graduation Process of IST Residential Master's Students



Appendix A.

Interview Questions

Interview – Dr. Frick, IST Department Chair

1. What do the students received in the admission package? Is it containing anything related with graduation requirements?
2. Does the orientation talk about program of studies, portfolio, instructional project, and graduation process?
3. Do the students usually get confused about program of studies, portfolio, instructional project, and graduation process? Can you make a guess, how many students who come to you and ask about program of studies, portfolio, instructional project, and graduation process?
4. Can you make a guess, why students get confused with those? What is your suggestion to solve this problem?
5. What happen if the students fail to complete the portfolio/instructional project by the deadline, but already register for graduation? Should they cancel their graduation? Does the department then send a notification to the graduate office?

Interview – Dr. Haynes, Portfolio advisor (committee)

1. Does the portfolio schedule mentioned in the IST website is always the same?
2. When is the deadline for fall term to submit the portfolio?
3. What happen if the students could not pass the final review?

Interview – Sarah, IST staff

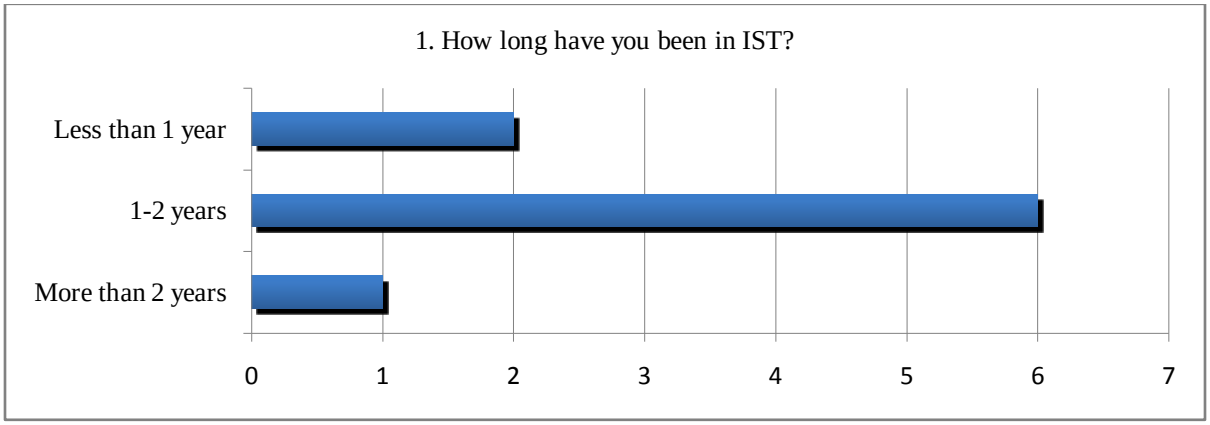
1. What do the students received in the admission package? Is it containing anything related with graduation requirements?
2. Does the orientation talk about program of studies, portfolio, instructional project, and graduation process?
3. Do the students usually get confused about program of studies, portfolio, instructional project, and graduation process? Can you make a guess, how many students who come to you and ask about program of studies, portfolio, instructional project, and graduation process?
4. Can you make a guess, why students get confused with those? What is your suggestion to solve this problem?

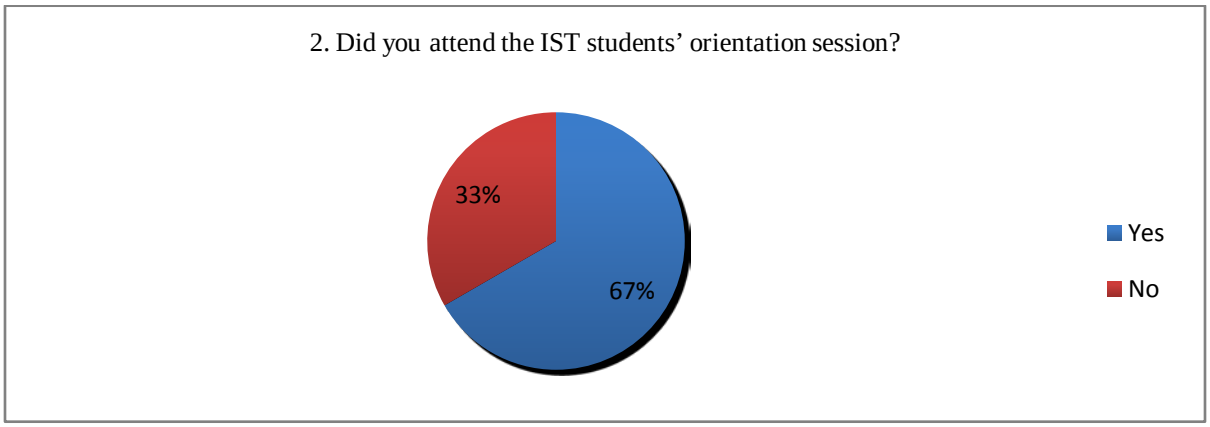
Interview - Susan Sloffer, Director of Matriculation, Enrollment and Records of School of Education at IUB

1. When is the deadline to register for graduation for students who are going to graduate on May and on December?
2. When is the deadline to submit the program of studies for students who are going to graduate on May and on December? What happen if students submit a program of studies later than the deadline?
3. What happen if the program of studies is already being submitted, but at the other hand, the students want to make a change?
4. If the students already register for graduation, can they postpone their graduation time? If yes, how, and what are the consequences?
5. Do you realize that some of the students do not understand about the program of studies form until they are almost ready to graduate? In your opinion, why does this happen? Do you have any suggestion on how to resolve this problem?

Appendix B.

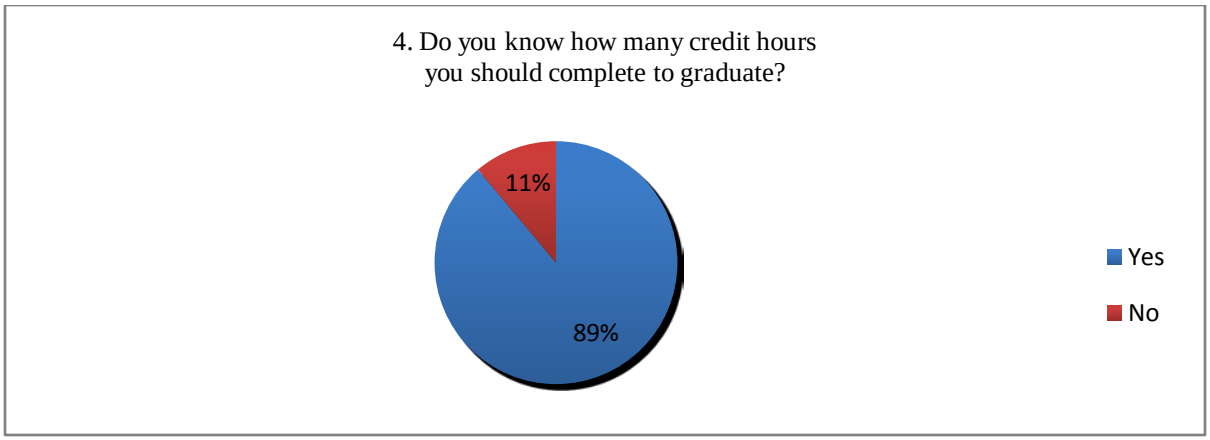
The Summary of Students Survey Results

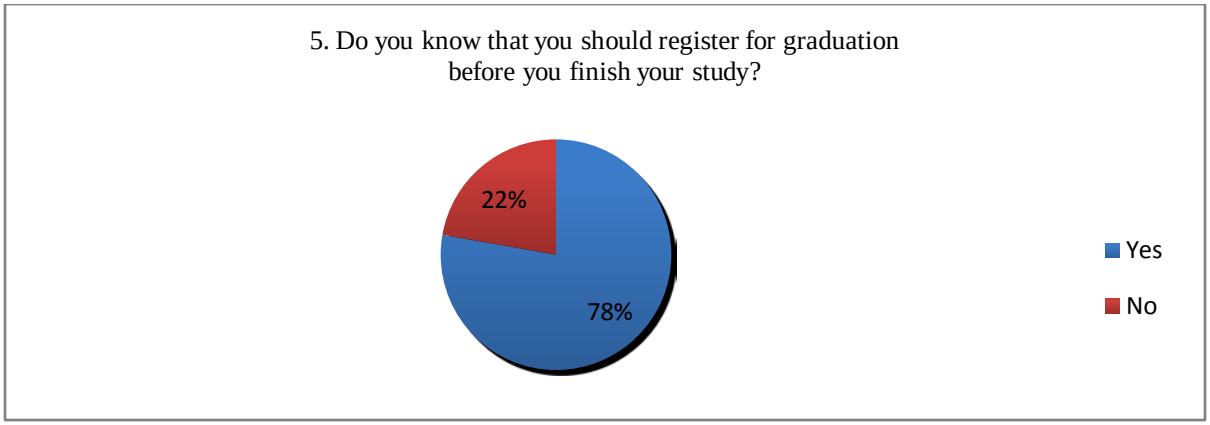


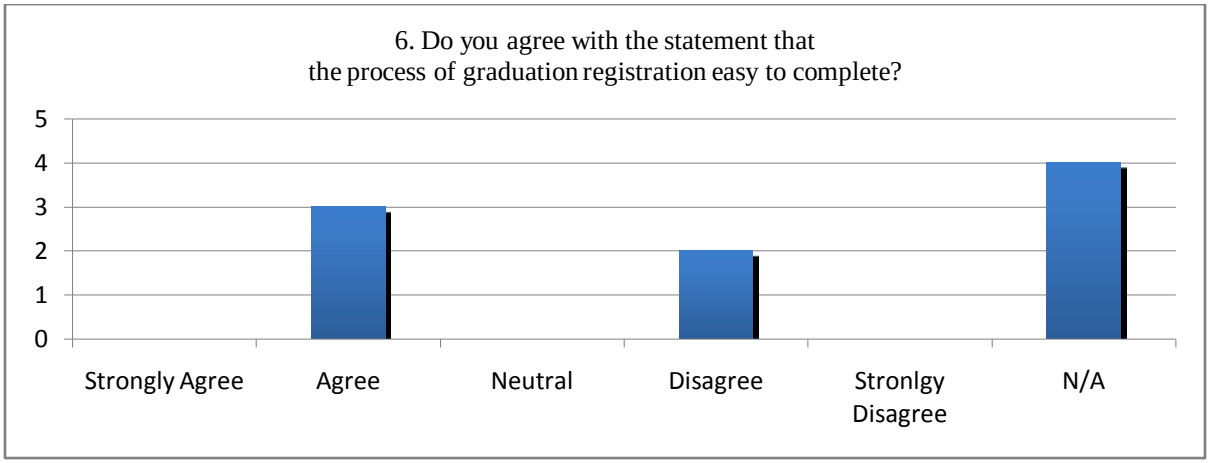


3. Please tell us in a series of numbered steps your understanding of what you have to do in order to graduate.

Most respondents (89%) mentioned about taking required and elective courses and complete portfolio. A few respondents (22%) answered that they knew that they should complete program of studies before graduation. No one mentioned about instructional project certificate.


4. Do you know how many credit hours
you should complete to graduate?
11%
89%
Yes
No


5. Do you know that you should register for graduation
before you finish your study?
22%
78%
Yes
No


6. Do you agree with the statement that
the process of graduation registration easy to complete?
5
4
3
2
1
0
Strongly Agree
Agree
Neutral
Disagree
Stronlgy Disagree
N/A

7. This question is related to program of studies form. Please choose one of the statements below that best represent your situation.

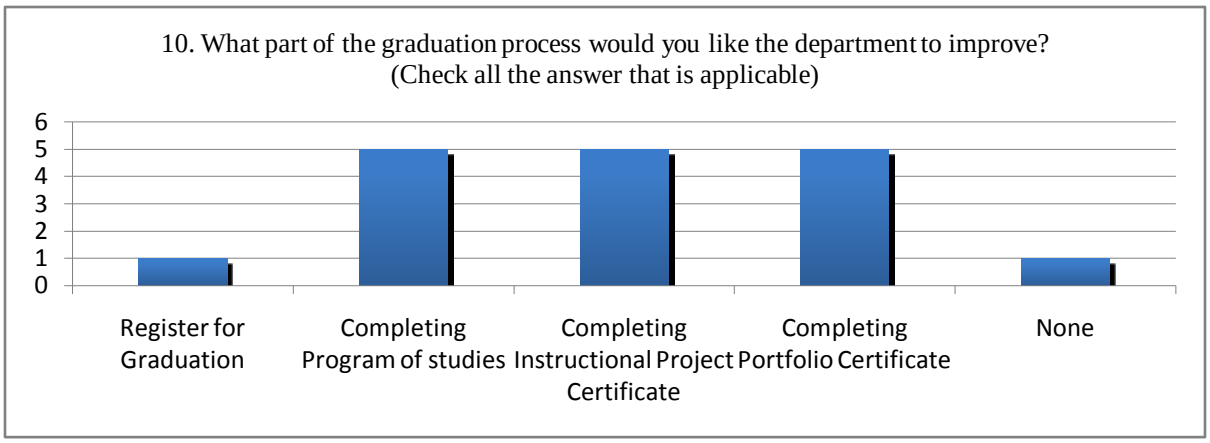
	Agree	Disagree
I know what a program of studies from is	78%	22%
I know that a program of studies from is one part of graduation requirements	67%	33%
I know how to complete a program of studies form	56%	44%

8. This question is related to instructional project certificate. Please choose one of the statements below that best represent your situation.

	Agree	**Disagree**
I know what an instructional project is	89%	11%
I know that an instructional project is one part of graduation requirements	78%	22%
I know how to complete an instructional project	33%	67%

9. This question is related to portfolio certificate. Please choose one of the statements below that best represent your situation.

	Agree	**Disagree**
I know what a portfolio is	89%	11%
I know that a portfolio is one part of graduation requirements	100%	0%
I know how to complete a portfolio	56%	44%



11. Please specify how the department should improve their explanation about the graduation process.

- Provide clear introduction and explanation on all items related to graduation during orientation. Academic advisors provide personal instruction and guidance to their students.
- The department wants each person to produce a portfolio that must meet approval. This often includes the creation and completion of online courses or curricula. Part of the reason that certain courses require Dreamweaver, for example, is so that students can create samples of their work using this program. Early on, the department needs to explain what the graduation process entails, including the portfolio process, and then show why it is relevant to learn certain software. The school should also offer a range of technology courses for credit, in order for students to learn them while in school, instead of having to take time away from their studies, to learn something that they need to graduate, outside the curriculum. Yet the IST Department does not teach any technology courses such as Flash, Dreamweaver, Captivate or other classes that are VALUED by employers, and that are so helpful for creating the portfolio.
- I want the department to explain this briefly in the orientation for new students.
- I just wanted to comment on question #8 "I know how to complete an instructional project": I was not sure if this was any project or a particular project. Again, I did not make it to orientation.
- The department informed the announcements via IST student list server. I think they should also email individual IU email accounts of Master's students in IST.
- I have to complete the Instructional Project Certificate on my own as I did not take a class that had this embedded for various reasons: 1) Was not offered 2) Class was only for distant students 3) Class was canceled due to low enrollment.