

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document: WRITING RESOURCES USED BY  
GRADUATE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS  
AND THEIR EFFECT ON ACADEMIC  
SATISFACTION.

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Language competence and social relations appear as key factors that impact the well-being and academic satisfaction of graduate international students (GISs). This study applies the situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and the social capital (Coleman, 1988, 1994) frameworks to describe GISs' access to resources to cope with the writing demands of their courses, and to determine whether there is an association between access to writing resources and academic satisfaction levels of graduate international students. A mixed methods approach, with a sequential qualitative/quantitative exploratory strategy was used in this study. Findings indicate that although graduate international students were aware of the writing services provided by the university, they used them partially. Graduate international students more likely consulted peers, academic advisors, and class professors when writing for their courses. Interesting patterns appeared when comparing students enrolled in the three biggest colleges at the university where the study was conducted. Graduate international students enrolled in the Engineering and Information Technology

College used significantly fewer writing resources than students enrolled in the colleges of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences and Natural and Mathematical Sciences. In addition, graduate international students enrolled in the college of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences faced more writing demands than students in the other two colleges. Regression analyses showed that those graduate international students who sought support when writing for their courses and reported higher levels of English ability indeed showed higher levels of academic satisfaction. After controlling for social relations, English ability, and writing demands of graduate courses, writing resources use was also positively associated with academic satisfaction. This research has important implications for expanding our theoretical understanding of writing as a social practice as well as developing programs to improve graduate international students academic experiences.