

Evidence and insights into the value-added by the MRSEC program to the graduate student experience

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It has been extremely rewarding to be part of the MRSEC as a new faculty member. ... [E]verything we do is a "first": a first time to build equipment, a first training session, and the exciting first experiments and presentations. Yet within my group, we lack near-peer mentoring and hierarchical knowledge transfer.

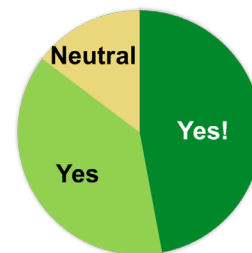
The MRSEC IRG is a dynamic environment that has embraced my young students, connecting them closely to collaborators in more established labs, both through science and outreach events.

[M]y students...see how science is presented by the diversity of voices across many related projects and complementary specialties. They have...informal interactions with...other groups, ...[visit] their labs, [see] how they do their experiments...analyze their data, and [observe] how the day-to-day tasks of science are done. This provides...[a] view of how scientific discovery happens.

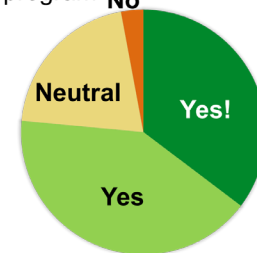
[I]t is critical to their development that they...ask unlimited questions of more experienced peers. I have witnessed huge growth in...their skills and self-confidence [which] is already leading to interesting scientific results.

- Observations of an Early Career Faculty Researcher, March 2024

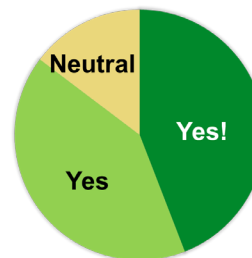
I am **part** of the program



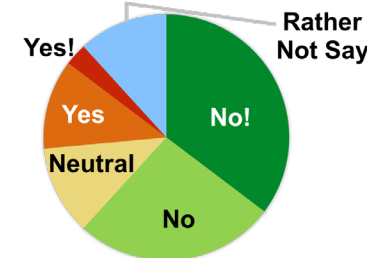
I feel like I am an **important member** of the program



I am **accepted** by the program



I **don't have many connections** with other participants at the program



Results of the 4th year assessment by an external evaluator revealed improvements since the 2nd year and strong evidence that belonging goals are being achieved, while also providing clues for guiding near-future efforts. Deepening student's understanding of their own value and increasing the breadth of their connections to other Center members will be an area of focus in the awards final two years.