



DataBytes
Office of Institutional
Effectiveness

Fall 2018

BITE-SIZE DATA FOR YOUR PERUSAL, EVALUATION, AND PLANNING

IN THIS ISSUE: STUDENT SURVEYS

Student Satisfaction Inventory: High Expectations, High Satisfaction

By Samuel Forcum and Josie Welsh

Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) Satisfaction-Priorities Survey

The Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) Satisfaction-Priorities Survey evaluates the student experience inside and outside of the classroom. Results are compared with peer institutions, in our case, with public, four-year universities across the nation. The RNL Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) was administered in December of last year, and we received results in 2018. The SSI asks nearly 100 questions about 12 areas of student life: academic advising, instructional effectiveness, recruitment and financial aid, registration effectiveness, safety and security, concern for the individual, campus climate, campus support services, student centeredness, service excellence, campus life, and responsiveness to diverse populations.

Eight hundred sixty-four respondents, or 14% of the student body, completed the survey. National four-year public averages are based on 71,029 responses. Our student body was represented demographically well within the survey; however, some demographic characteristics were overrepresented. For

example, juniors and seniors comprise 44% of Southern, but represented 62% of the SSI responses. Likewise, 61% of MSSU students are female, but 75% of surveys were completed by females. Finally, SSI respondents had higher GPAs than the full student body.

Comparing our data with other public four-year institutions, one might label our students “extra.” That is, our students not only expect more from a university; they also feel more satisfied with their college experience. Compared to four-year public institutions, Southern students placed higher importance on every item. Items for which at least 90% of respondents answered “important” or “very important” are listed in the side bar to the right.

In the same fashion, students rated satisfaction with the institution significantly higher than national averages for all items except three for which satisfaction scores mirrored national averages. Items for which the percent of students responding “satisfied” or “very satisfied” exceeded national averages by 20% include:

- Academic support services adequately meet the needs of students

MOST IMPORTANT

My academic advisor is approachable

My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major

There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus

I am able to register for the classes I need with few conflicts

Major requirements are clear and reasonable

Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields

My department prepares students well for their profession

The content within my courses is valuable

The quality of instruction I receive in most of my courses is excellent

- *I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts*
- *The staff in the health services area are competent*

RNL defines strengths items with high importance and high satisfaction. These are specifically identified as items above the mid-point in importance (top half) and in the upper quartile (25 percent) of the institution's satisfaction scores. Strengths, in order of importance, are listed on the side bar to the right.

Despite our high satisfaction scores, some factors revealed noteworthy gaps between importance and satisfaction. Three areas for improvement were identified: parking, food selection, and channels for expression of student complaints:

Parking – *The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate:*

Important or Very Important – 75%
Satisfied or Very Satisfied – 27%

Parking is well lighted and secure

Important or Very Important – 82%
Satisfied or Very Satisfied – 56%

Food Selection – *There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria*

Important or Very Important – 71%
Satisfied or Very Satisfied – 26%

Student Complaints - *Channels for expressing student complaints are readily available*

Important or Very Important – 82%
Satisfied or Very Satisfied – 53%

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness alternates administration of student satisfaction surveys with administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which will go out this spring.

Student Well-Being

Personal and professional well-being is one of three student learning goals articulated in our mission. Missouri Southern is a member of Partners in Prevention (PIP), Missouri's higher education substance abuse consortium dedicated to creating healthy and safe college campuses. Last spring PIP administered the Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors (MACHB) Survey to full-time students.

Demographics of our student body were representative (n = 329 respondents) with one exception. Whereas 14% of our student body resides on campus, 23% of survey respondents lived on campus. Comparing our survey respondents with those from other Missouri institutions (n = 9357), our sample had more Pell-eligible students (54% vs. 35%) and fewer students who said their parents pay for the majority of their school expenses (22% vs. 46%).

Sense of Belonging

Just over half (51%) of MSSU students agreed or strongly agreed that they feel as though they are a member of the campus community compared to 61% of students from other Missouri campuses.

Engagement

Fifty-five percent of students responded "none" when asked about involvement in campus activities, compared with 31% of students from schools across the State.

Alcohol Use

Consistent with finding from the 2015 college senior survey, our students reported less alcohol use when compared with peers. Sixty-one percent of respondents reported no drinking within the past two weeks (peers 48%); 24% (vs. 16%) said they have no interest in alcohol.

STRENGTHS - IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields

My department prepares students well for their professions

My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major

The campus is safe and secure for all students

There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus

Students with disabilities have access to academic support services

I am able to experience intellectual growth here

On the whole, the campus is well-maintained

Student disciplinary procedures are fair

The assessment and course placement procedures are reasonable

This institution has a good reputation within the community

Academic requirements and policies written in the catalog are easily understood

Academic support services adequately meet the needs of students

Freedom of expression is protected on campus

SAFE ZONES AT MISSOURI SOUTHERN – MACHB RESPONSES (n = 329)

A SafeZone is a designated space designed to increase the overall campus community's understanding of and awareness of issues faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (LGBTQ) and other marginalized persons.

Awareness of SafeZones – YES 60%

Plan to use SafeZones – 19%

Office of Institutional Effectiveness

321 Plaster School of Business
Missouri Southern State
University

<https://www.mssu.edu/academics/institutional-effectiveness/>

(417) 625-3096

Gambling

Do you gamble? Thirty-nine percent of MSSU students responded yes on the MACHB, compared to 23% of students from Missouri schools. The top three gambling activities listed by our students were slot machines 24%, lotto/scratch tickets 21%, and casino games 18%.

Stress

Like college students across the State, 94% of our students said academics is their main source of stress. Missouri Southern students listed jobs as a source of stress more frequently (49% vs. 38%) than their peers. When asked, *Whom do you think you can go to on campus when personal concerns arise*, 66% of students responded *friends* (comparators, 78%); 28% (32% comparators) responded *University Counseling Center*; 27%

Interpersonal Violence

Similar to students from colleges and universities across the State of Missouri, 23% of survey respondents said they had experienced non-consensual sexual contact. However, 94% of respondents said they had not experienced this form of interpersonal violence within the past year. Similar to students at peer institutions, 7% of survey respondents reported that within the past year someone had used a method of stalking to make the respondent fearful. The top three methods listed were social media, cell phone, and showing up in person at the respondent's place of residence.

responded *faculty/professor* (comparators 23%); 21% responded *academic advisor* (18% comparators).

Mental Health

Like college students across the State, 17% of our students responding to the MACHB said they had suicidal thoughts over the past year. Half of those students said they had not sought help for the suicidal thoughts (comparators, 45%); 19% said they preferred not to respond. Nearly half of respondents (47%) said they were aware of the *Ask, Listen, Refer* approach to suicide prevention (comparators 31%). Eighty-two percent of survey respondents said they would refer someone who said he or she was thinking about suicide to a local resource.

Counseling Center Survey Results - 2018

The University Counseling Center assesses its mission: to promote the personal growth and success of individuals in the MSSU community and the campus as a whole, fostering intellectual, personal, and psychological well-being. In spring 2018, Counseling Services invited 3237 students to complete a survey about their experiences with the Center. Eighty students indicating they had visited the Counseling Center responded to the survey.

The problems that brought me to counseling caused me to question my ability to stay in school (responded moderately, considerably, or a great deal) - 60%

Which of the following benefits have you gained from your experience with counseling:

Helped me stay in school - 30%

I learned one or more strategies to solve or cope with problems - 38%

Closing the Loop – IRB update

The fall 2017 issue of Databytes highlighted the Institutional Review Board process and steps taken to decrease the time from research submission to decision. In the year after implementing those changes, initial submissions for expedited review decreased time under review from 8.70 days to 2.86 days to initial decision. Total time under review (initial submission to official approval) also decreased from 11.62 days to 7.8 days.

STAFF

Josephine Welsh, PhD
Director

Josie is responsible for oversight of institutional research and assessment. She manages data collection and dissemination for federal and state reporting, Missouri performance-based funding, faculty and course evaluations, academic program review data, program-level assessment, accreditation data, campus climate surveys, and professional development.

Michael Pyle, MS
Research Analyst

Michael is responsible for general education and co-curricular assessment. He works closely with the General Education Committee and the Student Affairs Assessment Committee. He prepares data for federal reporting, analyzes data from national and local surveys, and manages large data sets for internal requests. Michael is responsible for senior testing of general education competencies.

Samuel Forcum, BS

Samuel is a programmer who creates user-friendly tools stakeholders can access to view institutional data and assessment updates available on our website. He also is responsible for internal reporting, consultation with the Academic Assessment Committee, research compliance administration through IRBnet, and management of our assessment software, WEAVE.