

What matters most to our students? Are we meeting their expectations?

Responses to the Fall 2009 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)

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The SSI Scales

The items on the Student Satisfaction Inventory have been analyzed statistically and conceptually to create scales. The scales provide composite scores that allow for an overview of the data. The scales are as follows:

- **Academic Advising and Counseling Effectiveness** assesses the comprehensiveness of the academic advising program, evaluating advisors' knowledge, competence, approachability, and personal concern for students.
- **Academic Services** assesses services students utilize to achieve their academic goals. These services include the library, computer labs, tutoring, and study areas.
- **Campus Climate** measures the extent to which the institution provides experiences that promote a sense of campus pride and belonging.
- **Campus Support Services** assesses the quality of support programs and services.
- **Concern for the Individual** assesses the institution's commitment to treating each student as an individual. Included in this assessment are those groups who frequently deal with students on a personal level (i.e., faculty, advisors, counselors, residence hall staff, etc.).
- **Instructional Effectiveness** measures students' academic experience, the curriculum, and the campus's overriding commitment to academic excellence.
- **Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness** measures the extent to which admissions counselors are competent and knowledgeable, along with students' perceptions of the effectiveness and availability of financial aid programs.
- **Registration Effectiveness** assesses issues associated with registration and billing and the extent to which the registration process is smooth and effective.
- **Responsiveness to Diverse Populations** assesses the institution's commitment to specific groups of students enrolled at the institution (e.g., underrepresented populations, students with disabilities, commuters, part-time students, and older, returning learners). Please note that this scale captures only a satisfaction score.

- **Safety and Security** measures the institution’s responsiveness to students’ personal safety and security on the campus.
- **Service Excellence** measures the areas of campus where quality service and personal concern for students are rated most and least favorably.
- **Student Centeredness** measures the institution’s attitude toward students and the extent to which they feel welcome and valued.

Analysis of the Scales

The best place to begin is by looking at the big picture and understanding the areas on campus which matter most to students. The following table summarizes the importance, satisfaction, and performance gap (calculated by subtracting the satisfaction score from the importance score) findings for the 12 scales. Lower performance gaps indicate less discrepancy between what students expect and how satisfied they are; lower performance gaps demonstrate when we are meeting student expectations. The scales are listed in order of importance.

Cypress College and National SSI Responses

Scale	Cypress College			National Comparison*		
	Average Importance	Average Satisfaction	Performance Gap	Average Importance	Average Satisfaction	Performance Gap
Student Centeredness	6.16	5.56**	0.60	5.98	5.37	0.61
Instructional Effectiveness	6.35	5.60**	0.75	6.18	5.40	0.78
Campus Support Services	5.83	5.27**	0.56	5.48	4.97	0.51
Safety and Security	6.33	5.41**	0.92	6.02	5.01	1.01
Academic Advising/Counseling	6.37	5.36**	1.01	6.14	5.20	0.94
Admissions and Financial Aid	6.26	5.35**	0.91	6.03	5.13	0.90
Academic Services	6.31	5.75**	0.56	6.05	5.45	0.60
Registration Effectiveness	6.35	5.61**	0.74	6.16	5.42	0.74
Service Excellence	6.15	5.44**	0.71	5.96	5.26	0.70
Concern for the Individual	6.26	5.36**	0.90	6.09	5.22	0.87
Campus Climate	6.17	5.51**	0.66	5.98	5.30	0.68
Responsiveness to Diverse Populations		5.71**			5.47	

(7 = very important/very satisfied, 1 = not important/not satisfied at all)

* Participating two-year public community, junior and technical colleges.

** Denotes an area in which Cypress College students are significantly **more satisfied** than their peers at other community colleges.

Satisfaction Items

The individual items on the SSI can be analyzed to identify strengths, challenges, and trends through the years.

Institutional Strengths and Challenges

The individual items on the SSI to identify strengths (items that were rated high on importance and high on satisfaction) can be incorporated into marketing and recruiting materials, and internal and external public relations opportunities, and can use to provide positive feedback to the faculty, staff, administration, and students. *Strengths are defined as being above the median in importance and in the top quartile of satisfaction.*

Strengths: Areas of high importance and satisfaction that should be highlighted in promotional materials. Most important items listed at the top.

- 18. The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent.
- 31. The campus is safe and secure for all students.
- 72. The online process for registering for classes (WebStar) is easy to use.
- 58. Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields.
- 71. The online process for applying to the college (CCCApply) is easy to use.
- 69. There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.
- 70. I am able to experience intellectual growth here.
- 66. Program requirements are clear and reasonable.
- 14. Library resources and services are adequate.
- 35. Policies and procedures regarding registration and course selection are clear and well-publicized.
- 34. Computer labs are adequate and accessible.
- 68. On the whole, the campus is well-maintained. ★
- 51. There are convenient ways of paying my school bill. ★
- 61. Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.
- 43. Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable.
- 28. It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.
- 79. The campus is physically accessible to people with disabilities.
- 36. Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.
- 21. There are a sufficient number of study areas on campus. ★

★ Denotes a new institutional strength, compared to 2007.

The items can also be analyzed to determine key challenges (high importance and low satisfaction). These are the areas that the campus needs to address to improve student persistence – areas where students expect a lot, but where the institution is currently failing to meet student expectations. *Challenges are defined as being above the median in importance and the bottom quartile of satisfaction and/or the top quartile of performance gaps.* The information on the following page pinpoints primary strengths and challenges; the numbers refer to survey item numbers.

Challenges: Areas of high importance and low satisfaction that should claim the institution's immediate attention. In descending order of importance.

- 73. Classes are offered frequently enough for me to complete my educational program in a reasonable amount of time.
- 15. I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts. B
- 8. Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.
- 32. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements. B
- 75. Campus restrooms are clean and sanitary.
- 40. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the transfer requirements of other schools.
- 39. The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.
- 52. This school does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals. B
- 48. Counseling staff care about students as individuals.
- 65. Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class.
- 12. My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward.
- 20. Financial aid counselors are helpful.
- 25. My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.

 Denotes a new institutional challenge.

Student Satisfaction Trends

Differences in satisfaction can be compared at the item level between student responses in 2007 and those in the current 2009 survey. Student satisfaction in Fall 2009 was significantly different than in Fall 2007 on about 30% of the survey items. The following list identifies the items with the largest gains between 2007 and 2009.

- ★ On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.
- ★ Campus signs help me find the places and services I need.
- ★ Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.
- ★ This campus is physically accessible to people with disabilities.
- ★ Security staff respond quickly to emergencies.
- ★ Campus restrooms are clean and sanitary.
- ★ The campus is safe and secure for students.
- ★ Security staff are helpful.
- ★ Financial aid counselors are helpful.
- ★ The institution is committed to students with disabilities.

There were few areas for which students surveyed in Fall 2009 were less satisfied than those surveyed in Fall 2007. The items with significantly lower satisfaction are the following:

- I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.
- Classes are offered frequently enough for me to complete my educational program in a reasonable amount of time.
- Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.
- The online process for registering for classes (WebStar) is easy to use.