



Student Satisfaction Inventory

Spring 2010



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Executive Summary

- The majority of students that participated were female (242, 70.14%), between the ages 19-24 (170, 49.1%), and Caucasian/White (273, 79.1%)
- A majority (272, 80.2%) were from in state, while 31 (9.1%) indicated out-of-state and 36 (10.6%) indicated international residence classification
- Only 14 percent (51) of the respondents indicated that they live on campus versus owning a home, renting or living with family and a majority (200, 58%) also work either full time or part time off campus
- The student class level was evenly distributed with 76 (21.9%) freshmen, 76 (21.9%) sophomores, 68 (19.6%) juniors and 95 (27.4%) seniors participating
- A majority of student participants had the educational goal to receive their bachelor's degree (254, 73.8%) and self-reported a grade point average of 3.5 and above (226, 67%)
- Student participants were most satisfied with the accurate portrayal of the MSU campus by counselors in their recruiting practices ($\bar{x} = 5.56$)
- The ability to register with few conflicts was important ($\bar{x} = 6.60$) to students, yet some dissatisfaction with the process ($\bar{x} = 5.23$) was identified
- Significant importance was evident in that financial aid awards should be announced in a timely manner to aid in college planning ($\bar{x} = 6.36$) and satisfaction with the time of awards had a mean average of $\bar{x} = 5.32$, a $\bar{x} = 1.04$ gap
- The largest gap, with respect to academic advising, between student satisfaction and importance was $\bar{x} = .77$ student participants indicated importance in having their academic advisor help set goals to work towards, yet were not satisfied with their advisors efforts
- When students were asked to indicate the importance of concerned residence hall staff about individual students, the average mean was $\bar{x} = 5.65$, while satisfaction with the concern of residence hall staff was $\bar{x} = 4.83$; a gap of $\bar{x} = .82$
- The Student Center providing a comfortable atmosphere was the one factor under student activities that students rated with the highest satisfaction for both survey years (2008 $\bar{x} = 5.80$; 2010 $\bar{x} = 5.86$)
- The 2010 student participants indicated that a competent health services staff was important ($\bar{x} = 6.15$) and were relatively satisfied with their service ($\bar{x} = 5.62$)
- The importance of visiting with faculty to influence the decision to attend MSU gained from the 2008 ($\bar{x} = 5.33$) to the 2010 ($\bar{x} = 5.87$) survey administration

Minot State University

Academic and Institutional Projects
Student Satisfaction Inventory Report
Spring 2010

Noel Levitz is a partner to Minot State University that specializes in strategic planning for increased enrollment and student success. Noel Levitz has conducted numerous surveys specific to student satisfaction perceptions since 1994. Specifically, the Student Satisfactory Inventory was developed, by Noel Levitz, as a tool to improve the quality of student life and learning by obtaining student perspectives specific to their educational experiences. The SSI measures student satisfaction and priorities related to specific campus experiences. The data collected is used to guide strategic planning, increase student retention rates, identify needs in meeting specific accreditation requirements, identify areas of strength for institutional marketing and provide the ability to chart objectives to ultimately reach visions set forth by MSU. The SSI administration is mandated as a North Dakota University System accountability measure. Each institution within the NDUS system must participate biannually in the administration of the SSI. Minot State University has participated in the past four administrations (2002-2008).

Sample and Methodology

The SSI instrument was designed to gather the student's satisfaction and level of importance to a wide array of expectation statements. With each expectation statement the student is asked to indicate their level of perceived importance on a seven-point rating scale with "1" = not important at all and "7" = very important and the student's level of satisfaction using the same rating. The rating format is split to allow students to indicate their importance on the left and satisfaction on the right side. The SSI instrument provides 12 composite scales, they include:

1. Academic advising effectiveness
2. Campus Climate
3. Campus Life
4. Campus Support Services
5. Concern for the Individual
6. Instructional Effectiveness
7. Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness
8. Registration Effectiveness
9. Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
10. Safety and Security
11. Service Excellence
12. Student Centeredness

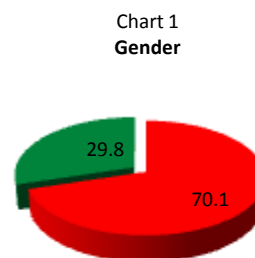
MSU included 12 additional questions specific to the campus and the NDUS office with regards to services rendered to students overall. The past SSI administrations on the MSU campus were in a paper-format, however, the 2010 administration offered the opportunity to administer the survey in an online format. The sample for the 2010 administration was a census sample. A list of every student enrolled spring 2010 was obtained through MSU's human-resource management-systems software, PeopleSoft. The list extracted from PeopleSoft contained each student's e-mail address. A total of 3,171 e-mail addresses were uploaded onto the Noel Levitz SSI interface during mid-March 2010. The week following, students received a letter of invitation explaining the reason for the study and provided a link to participate. Four days following the letter of invitation a reminder letter was sent to all students. Second, third and fourth reminders were sent each following week to encourage students who had not already participated to participate. Of the 3,170 students invited, 680 e-mail messages failed and 65 bounced back due to security settings on the student's e-mail accounts. It is estimated that an average of 2,050 students received the invitations and reminders that were sent. By the completion date 350 students had participated, yielding a response rate of 11 percent.

No incentives were offered during the 2010 administration. However, in order to promote the importance of the survey and the student's participation many marketing approaches were utilized, they included:

- Posting fliers in residence halls on campus
- Posting a flier on MSU's Facebook Page
- Posting the administration dates on the MSU Web calendar of events
- Posting a reminder to students on the student services homepage
- Posted a full page ad in the Red & Green, the student newspaper
- Sent a letter to all faculty to remind them to encourage their students to participate
- Fliers and posters were created and posted across campus with concentration in high-student traffic areas
- Brief ad was presented on the campus marquee and various television displays
- Posted a advertisement on the Blackboard Homepage for online learners
- Reminders were sent each week in the daily campus announcements which were delivered by the Office of Public Information

Student Demographics

The majority of students who participated were female (242, 70.14%), between the ages of 19 to 24 (170, 49.1%), and Caucasian/White (273, 79.1%) (See chart 1). With respect to residence classification, a majority (272, 80.2%) were from in state, while 31 (9.1%) indicated out-of-state and 36 (10.6%) indicated international residence classification. Only 14 percent (51) of the respondents indicated that they live on campus versus owning a home, renting or living with family, and a majority (200, 58%) also work either full time or



part time off campus. The primary enrollment status indicated by the student participants was day (277, 81.2%) and full time (250, 72.4%) status. The student class level was fairly distributed with 76 (21.9%) freshmen, 76

(21.9%) sophomores, 68 (19.6%)

juniors and 95 (27.4%) seniors

participating (See chart 2). A

majority of student participants had

the educational goal to receive their

bachelor's degree (254, 73.8%) and

self reported a grade point average of 3.5 and above (226, 67%). Predominantly, the majors that

the student participants declared were: nursing (40, 11.3%), management (23, 6.8%), elementary

education (21, 6.21%), and social work (19, 5.6%) (See chart 3). When student participants were

asked preference with regards to college, 234

(68%) indicated that Minot State University

was their first choice, while 77 (22.3%)

responded that MSU was their second choice.

A majority (277, 80.2%) responded that the

MSU website provided useful information

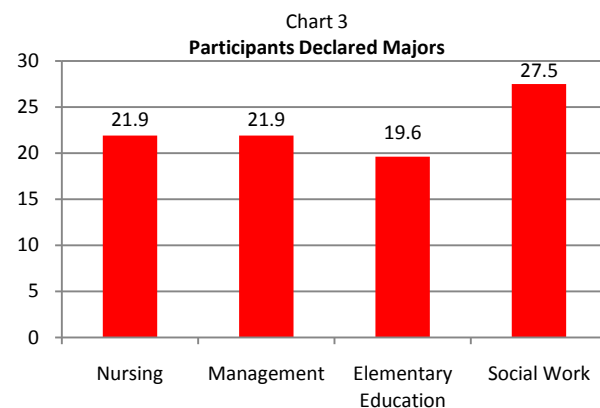
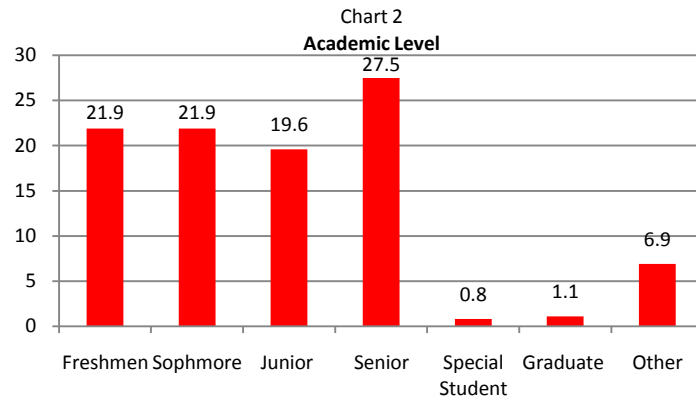
that assisted them in making the decision to

enroll at MSU.

Students were given expectation statements by service and asked to indicate their

perceived importance and satisfaction with the statements. The data compiled by Noel Levitz

included an average importance score and an average satisfaction score. In addition, a



performance gap was given by calculating the difference between students perceived importance and satisfaction on a seven-point rating scale. In essence, the larger the performance gap the greater the discrepancy. Similar services were grouped into categories that aligned with MSU departments. The categories identified were: admissions, registration, financial aid, advising, residence halls, student activities, health services, faculty and overall campus details.

Admissions and Enrollment

When students were asked specific admissions and enrollment services questions, the area identified as the most important to student participants was that admissions staff were knowledgeable (\bar{x} =6.27) the importance of knowledgeable admissions staff was also ranked high in the 2008 survey administration (\bar{x} =6.11). Student participants were most satisfied with the accurate portrayal of the MSU campus by counselors in their recruiting practices (\bar{x} =5.56). The largest performance gap was found among students indicating that phone calls with enrollment services staff influenced their decision to attend MSU (\bar{x} =.84). A large increase in importance is evident among this variable in 2008 the mean average importance was \bar{x} =4.66, while the 2010 participants mean importance was \bar{x} =5.37. Interestingly, an increase in importance and satisfaction between the survey years was evident among all variables in the category.

Table 1 Admissions and Enrollment Services	Importance 2008	Importance 2010	Satisfaction 2008	Satisfaction 2010	Gap 2008	Gap 2010
4. Admission staff are knowledgeable	6.11	6.27	5.10	5.46	1.01	.81
43. Admissions counselors respond to prospective students needs and requests	5.65	6.05	4.83	5.38	.82	.68
48. Admissions counselors accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices	5.71	6.04	5.05	5.56	.66	.48
77. Publications from MSU's enrollment services area influenced my decision to attend MSU	5.02	5.48	4.67	4.87	.35	.61
78. Phone calls from/to MSU's enrollment services area influenced my decision to attend MSU	4.66	5.37	4.19	4.53	.47	.84
79. E-Mail from MSU's enrollment services influenced my decision to attend MSU	4.68	5.32	4.24	4.58	.44	.74
81. Information received at a college fair influenced my decision to attend MSU	5.0	5.53	4.70	4.98	.31	.55

82. Information received during a high school visit by MSU recruiters influenced my decision to attend MSU	1					
	5.2	5.61	4.76	5.06	.47	.55
	3					

Registration and Orientation

The ability to register with few conflicts was important ($\bar{x} = 6.60$) to students, yet some dissatisfaction with the process ($\bar{x} = 5.23$) was identified. Registering for classes without conflict held the largest gap for both the 2008 ($\bar{x} = 1.33$) and the 2010 ($\bar{x} = 1.37$) survey years. Another area in which students indicated importance was having helpful personnel involved with registration ($\bar{x} = 6.29$). A gap of $\bar{x} = .63$ was identified between the importance of helpful staff during registration and satisfaction with the process.

Table 2 Registration and Orientation	Importance	Importance	Satisfaction	Satisfaction	Gap	Gap
	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010
27. The personnel involved in registration are helpful	6.11	6.29	5.28	5.66	.83	.63
34. I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts	6.48	6.60	5.15	5.23	1.33	1.37
50. Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable	6.06	6.15	5.29	5.79	.77	.36
64. New student-Orientation services help students adjust to college	5.77	5.83	5.09	5.28	.68	.55

Financial Aid

Variance among survey years was evident with respect to financial aid data. During the 2008 administration, students indicated an importance ($\bar{x} = 6.25$) that adequate financial aid was available for most students the average mean of satisfaction increased considerably ($\bar{x} = 4.78$ to $\bar{x} = 5.28$) from the 2008 to 2010 survey year. Importance was evident in that financial aid awards be announced in a timely manner to aid in college planning was ($\bar{x} = 6.36$) and satisfaction with the time of awards had a mean average of $\bar{x} = 5.32$, a $\bar{x} = 1.04$ gap. The satisfaction mean between the 2008 and 2010 survey years showed an increase ($\bar{x} = 4.88$ to $\bar{x} = 5.41$) with the helpfulness of financial aid counselors. With respect to decision to enroll, financial aid packages had least amount of importance in the financial aid category ($\bar{x} = 5.83$) when compared to the other variables (See Table 3).

Table 3 Financial Aid	Importance	Importance	Satisfaction	Satisfaction	Gap	Gap
	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010
5. Financial aid counselors are helpful	5.94	6.27	4.88	5.41	1.06	.86
12. Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning	6.04	6.36	4.90	5.32	1.14	1.04
17. Adequate financial aid is available for most students	6.25	6.34	4.78	5.28	1.47	1.06
75. My scholarship/award package influenced my decision to attend MSU	5.54	5.83	4.86	4.99	.68	.84

Academic Advising

The importance that an academic advisor be approachable was indicated ($\bar{x} = 6.55$). The largest gap between student satisfaction and importance was $\bar{x} = .77$ student participants indicated importance in having their academic advisor help them set goals to work towards, yet were not satisfied with their advisors efforts. Among the five questions specific to academic advising the most important factor designated by the participants was knowledge of their academic advisor about particular requirements of their majors ($\bar{x} = 6.59$) students were also the most satisfied with this factor ($\bar{x} = 5.96$) (see Table 4).

Table 4 Academic Advising	Importance	Importance	Satisfaction	Satisfaction	Gap	Gap
	2008	2010	2008	2010	2008	2010
6. My academic advisor is approachable	6.44	6.55	5.65	5.84	.79	.71
14. My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual	6.20	6.34	5.35	5.69	.85	.65
19. My academic advisor helps me set goals to work towards	6.01	6.19	5.00	5.42	1.01	.77
33. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major	6.53	6.59	5.68	5.96	.85	.63
83. The offering of a Mentor Program influenced my decision to attend MSU	4.42	6.46	4.24	5.78	.18	.68

Residence Halls

Specific statements were posed to student participants on the importance of residence life of the 341 students who participated, only 51 (14.9%) indicated their current residency as living on campus. This helps to explain the low importance ($\bar{x} = 4.88$) of living conditions in the residence halls (adequate space, lighting, heat, air, etc.) When students were asked to indicate the importance of concerned residence hall staff about individual students, the average mean was $\bar{x} = 5.65$, while satisfaction with the concern of residence hall staff was $\bar{x} = 4.83$; a gap of $\bar{x} = .82$.

A large performance gap ($\bar{x} = 1.09$) was evident between satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 4.64$) and importance ($\bar{x} = 5.73$) for the statement that residence hall regulations were reasonable.

Student Activities

Each student enrolled at Minot State University is required to pay student activity fees as part of their tuition; putting student activity fees to good use was important to students among both survey years. Among the 2010 student participants ($\bar{x} = 6.05$), the largest gap between satisfaction and importance was evident among the use of student activity fees. The least important factor was the offering of intramural activities, respectively for both survey years (2008 $\bar{x} = 4.97$; 2010 $\bar{x} = 4.88$). The Student Center providing a comfortable atmosphere was the one factor under student activities that students rated with the highest satisfaction for both survey years (2008 $\bar{x} = 5.80$; 2010 $\bar{x} = 5.86$). A considerable change in performance gap was evident among this factor as well. In the 2008 survey year, student participants satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 5.80$) nearly reached the level of importance ($\bar{x} = 5.87$). During the 2010 survey year, student participants satisfaction ($\bar{x} = 5.86$) surpassed the level of importance ($\bar{x} = 5.78$).

	Importance 2008	Importance 2010	Satisfaction 2008	Satisfaction 2010	Gap 2008	Gap 2010
73. Student activities fees are put to good use	5.94	6.05	4.70	4.80	1.24	1.25
42. There are a sufficient number of weekend activities for students	4.97	5.25	4.12	4.58	.99	.67
46. I can easily get involved in campus organizations	5.54	5.64	5.17	5.38	.37	.26
52. The student center is a comfortable place for students to spend their leisure time	5.87	5.78	5.80	5.86	.07	-.08
9. A variety of intramural activities are offered	4.97	4.88	5.12	5.19	-.15	-.31

Health Services

With respect to health services on campus, student participants were asked to indicate the importance of competent health services staff and their satisfaction with the services received.

The 2010 student participants indicated that a competent health services staff was important ($\bar{x} = 6.15$) and were relatively satisfied with their service ($\bar{x} = 5.62$). The importance of having

campus counselors that care about students as individuals had a mean average of $\bar{x} = 6.00$, with student satisfaction at $\bar{x} = 5.38$.

Faculty

Numerous questions were asked regarding student satisfaction of faculty. When students were asked to indicate the importance of reasonable assessment and course placement the mean average was $\bar{x} = 6.60$, an increase in importance from the 2008 survey administration. The average mean gap was also the highest among the faculty questions, the average mean for satisfaction of reasonable assessment and placement was $\bar{x} = 5.23$, a gap of $\bar{x} = 1.37$. In addition to assessment and course placement, there were three key areas with regard to faculty that indicated at least a one-point gap, they were timely feedback, consideration of student differences and instruction within field was excellent.

The importance of visiting with faculty to influence decision to attend MSU gained from the 2008 ($\bar{x} = 5.33$) to the 2010 ($\bar{x} = 5.87$) survey administration. Although an increase in the average mean gap was evident (2008 $\bar{x} = .35$ and 2010 $\bar{x} = .51$), among all faculty statements the least gap remained to be that visiting with faculty influenced the decision of the student to attend MSU (See table 6).

	Importance 2008	Importance 2010	Satisfaction 2008	Satisfaction 2010	Gap 2008	Gap 2010
3. Faculty care about me as an individual	6.02	6.19	5.15	5.40	.87	.79
16. The instruction in my field is excellent	6.47	6.55	5.52	5.54	.95	1.01
25. Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students	6.32	6.45	5.01	5.72	1.31	.99
34. The assessment and course placement procedures are reasonable	5.99	6.60	5.18	5.23	.81	1.37
47. Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in courses	6.17	6.39	4.83	5.33	1.34	1.06
53. Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course	6.03	6.20	4.80	5.19	1.23	1.01
55. Major requirements are clear and reasonable	6.30	6.46	5.35	5.78	.95	.68
58. The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent	6.36	6.52	5.33	5.54	1.03	.98
61. Adjunct faculty are competent as classroom instructors	5.91	6.22	5.23	5.55	.70	.67
65. Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours	6.27	6.33	5.43	5.68	.84	.65
68. Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field	6.41	6.53	5.67	5.56	.74	.66
70. Graduate teaching assistants are competent as classroom instructors	5.75	5.99	5.02	5.49	.73	.50
80. Visiting with faculty influenced my decision to attend MSU	5.33	5.87	4.98	5.36	.35	.51

MSU Campus

When student participants were asked to indicate the importance and satisfaction of a number of statements related to campus engagement, the largest mean gap ($\bar{x} = 1.26$) referred to students getting the run-around when seeking information on campus. The second largest gap among MSU campus statements was the statement, “tuition paid is a worthwhile investment” ($\bar{x} = 1.06$). Although both of these gaps indicate a need for improvement, an overall increase in the gap was evident between the 2008 ($\bar{x} = 1.33$) and 2010 ($\bar{x} = 1.08$) surveys with respect to both statements. An increase in importance among all MSU campus statements was evident, except for the statement on knowing what is happening on campus. In 2008, the importance of generally knowing what was happening on campus had an average mean of $\bar{x} = 5.70$, while in 2010 the average mean of importance was $\bar{x} = 5.59$. There was a slight decrease in satisfaction among the survey years for the statement that most students feel a sense of belonging at MSU (2008 $\bar{x} = 5.17$, 2010 $\bar{x} = 5.15$) (See Table 7).

	Importance 2008	Importance 2010	Satisfaction 2008	Satisfaction 2010	Gap 2008	Gap 2010
1. Most student feel a sense of belonging here	5.65	5.63	5.17	5.15	.48	.48
29. It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus	6.23	6.31	5.38	5.46	.85	.85
37. I feel a sense of pride about my campus	5.57	5.69	5.02	5.21	.55	.48
39. I am able to experience intellectual growth at MSU	6.26	6.35	5.54	5.66	.72	.99
41. There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus	6.15	6.28	5.35	5.66	.80	.72
45. Students are made to feel welcome on this campus	6.14	6.24	5.35	5.67	.79	.57
51. This institution has a good reputation within the community	6.11	6.25	5.69	5.96	.42	.29
57. I seldom get the “run around” when seeking information on campus	6.09	6.23	4.68	4.97	1.41	1.26
59. This institution shows concern for students as individuals	6.16	6.27	5.16	5.41	1.00	.86
60. I generally know what’s happening on campus	5.70	5.59	4.77	5.08	.93	.51
62. There is a strong commitment to racial harmony on this campus	5.87	5.96	5.36	5.69	.51	.27
66. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment	6.30	6.44	4.97	5.36	1.33	1.08
67. Freedom of expression is protected on campus	6.00	6.09	5.22	5.58	.78	.51
72. On the whole, the campus is well maintained	6.17	6.25	5.76	6.02	.41	.23
76. The campus visit provided me with useful information to assist in my decision to attend MSU	5.62	5.77	5.23	5.30	.39	.47

Strengths and Weaknesses of MSU

The Strategic Planning Overview provided by Noel Levitz offered a list of 20 strengths and weaknesses compared to other North Dakota four-year institutions. Among the list of strengths were the knowledge of academic advisors and the perspective that their academic advisor was approachable and is generally concerned about the success of the students as individuals. Other strengths mentioned in the report were the perspective that the institution had a good reputation within the community, students are made to feel welcome on campus and the overall feeling of safety and security while on campus. With respect to campus staff, students indicated strengths were bookstore staff were helpful, the library services and resources were adequate and the personnel involved in registration are helpful (See Tables 8 and 9).

Table 8

MSU Strengths

- 33. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the requirements of my major
- 6. My academic advisor is approachable
- 68. Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field
- 7. The campus is safe and secure for all students
- 55. Major requirements are clear and reasonable
- 39. I am able to experience intellectual growth here
- 14. My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual
- 26. Computer labs are adequate and accessible
- 65. Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours
- 27. The personnel involved in registration are helpful
- 18. Library resources and services are adequate
- 51. This institution has a good reputation within the community
- 72. On the whole, the campus is well maintained
- 45. Students are made to feel welcome on this campus
- 54. Bookstore staff are helpful
- 15. The staff in the health services area are competent
- 50. Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable

Table 9

MSU Weaknesses

- 34. I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts
- 16. The instruction in my major field is excellent
- 8. The content of the courses within my major is valuable
- 58. The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent
- 25. Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students
- 66. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment
- 69. There is good variety of courses provided on this campus
- 47. Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course
- 12. Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning
- 17. Adequate financial aid is available for most students
- 21. The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate
- 5. Financial aid counselors are helpful
- 59. This institution shows concern for students as individuals
- 57. I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus
- 53. Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course

A number of statements were found to have increased importance and satisfaction between the 2008 and 2010 survey years. The quality of instruction being excellent both increased in importance and satisfaction, as well as the major requirements being clear and reasonable. Timely feedback on behalf of faculty was also more important and students indicated

an increase in satisfaction as well. The timing of financial aid awards increased in importance and satisfaction from the 2008 survey year, as did helpful registration personnel (See Table 10).

Table 10
Increase in Importance and Satisfaction vs. Spring 2008

58. The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent
55. Major requirements are clear and reasonable
47. Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course
12. Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning
27. The personnel involved in registration are helpful
35. The assessment and course placement procedures are reasonable
4. Admissions staff are knowledgeable
5. Financial aid counselors are helpful
61. Adjunct faculty are competent as classroom instructors
36. Security staff respond quickly in emergencies
53. Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course
19. My academic advisor helps me set goals to work towards
3. Faculty care about me as an individual
54. Bookstore staff are helpful
50. Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable