

Methodology

Overview

This report summarizes results of the student satisfaction study conducted at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's residential campuses in Daytona Beach, Florida and Prescott, Arizona by the Office of Institutional Research (IR). The purpose of this study is to obtain data on students' perceptions of various aspects of their college experience. The results of the study are used to identify institutional strengths and areas in need of improvement; as well as to pinpoint more precisely the institution's effectiveness in meeting the expectations of students.

Survey Instrument

The Office of Institutional Research administered the *Student Satisfaction Inventory*TM (SSI), a questionnaire created by the consulting firm, Noel-Levitz, INC. The SSI consists of items, expressed as statements of expectation, which cover the full range of college experiences. The instrument included 10 additional questions tailored to the needs of the university. The SSI was administered to students from all class levels and degree programs. Respondents were asked to indicate, on a seven point Likert response scale, the level of importance they assign to the expectation, as well as their level of satisfaction that the expectation is being met.

Sample Selection

This survey was administered in the fall 2010 semester at both campuses. The sample of students was selected as follows: IR identified the total number of responses needed at each campus in order to obtain an error margin of approximately 5%. To ensure representation across all class levels and majors, Fall 2010 courses were grouped into four categories that were considered to best segregate new students, continuing lower classmen, upper classmen, and graduate students. The number of responses needed within each of these categories was assigned proportionately to the Fall 2010 enrollment distribution of students in those categories. Faculty members were asked by their department chairs to participate by volunteering class time, thus allowing the completion of the survey in class. IR made contact with teachers at both campuses and developed a schedule for the administration of the surveys. Noel-Levitz, Inc. performed scanning of survey instruments and initial analysis of results. Final analysis of data, generation of additional statistics and final report were performed by IR.

Response Rates

A total of 1,503 surveys were completed at both campuses (965 at Daytona Beach and 538 at Prescott). This represents approximately 19% of the total student population in Daytona Beach and 32% of the total student population in Prescott. Data were statistically weighted where necessary to correct for disproportionate response rates.

Possible Sources of Error

2010 Student Satisfaction Survey
Daytona Beach and Prescott Campuses

The results of any survey research are subject to sampling and/or non-sampling errors. (1) Sampling error— Because this survey is not a census, a possible sampling error is the inability to survey students because they were not present during the days the survey administration took place. (2) Non-sampling - This research is also subject to errors such as unit item non-response, where students answered only certain items. No imputation was performed for missing data items. Another type of non-sampling error is measurement error, which may exist for some of the variables due to the difficulty of defining ambiguous concepts. Lastly, differences in interpreting questions and inability or unwillingness to give correct information are two other sources of non-sampling errors.

Calculation of Percentage-Responses

Responses from this national student satisfaction study are only available in average response form, which are calculated from a seven-point Likert scale. Although the assumption of symmetry and equal intervals in Likert scale construction is controversial, this is the only source of national data from Noel-Levitz available to make comparisons among institutions. In addition to these average responses (used in this report only to compare ERAU findings to the national comparative group), IR has generated percentage responses. For importance and satisfaction ratings, percentage responses items presented in this report were obtained by collapsing the seven-point Likert response scale into three categories: not important, neutral, and important (importance ratings); and dissatisfied, neutral, and satisfied (satisfaction ratings).