

The Office of Institutional Research (OIR) produces *Research Clips* to provide the university community a brief report on a variety of topics. In most cases the "clips" are from a more detailed research project or survey analysis which can be found on the OIR website at <http://www.und.edu/dept/datacol/index.html>.

The Journey from Freshman to Senior

An analysis of what UND students feel are the important and satisfying aspects of their university experience, broken down by class level.

What's most important to freshmen and what's not?

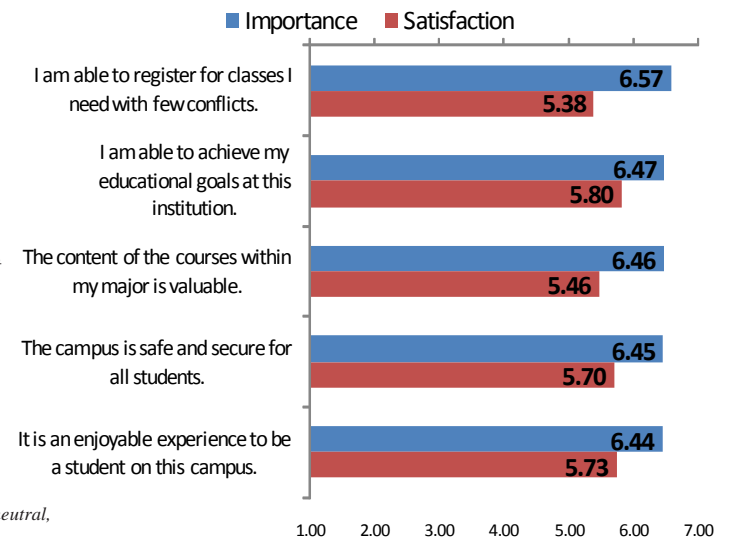
From the 2008 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory, the most important issues reported by UND freshmen revolve primarily around issues related to their selected major such as the availability of the courses and ease of registration as well as feeling comfortable with the campus atmosphere and their experience as a student.

Not so important for the 2008 freshmen class are: *library staff are helpful and approachable (4.82), counseling staff care about students as individuals (4.97), participation in research activities or conduct research projects (5.08), residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual (5.13), variety of intramural activities are offered (5.19).*

Importance Scale: 7=very important, 6=important, 5=somewhat important, 4=neutral, 3=somewhat unimportant, 2=not very important, and 1=not important at all.

Satisfaction Scale: 7=very satisfied, 6=satisfied, 5=somewhat satisfied, 4=neutral, 3=somewhat dissatisfied, 2=not very satisfied, and 1=not satisfied at all.

The below graph shows the top 5 important factors for freshmen students along with their level of satisfaction in those areas



On a scale of 1= not satisfied at all and 7= very satisfied, participating freshmen reported high levels of satisfaction with *the variety of courses provided (5.89), gender equity and equal opportunity in the class room (5.84), ability to achieve educational goals (5.80), knowledgeable faculty (5.80) and comfortable campus atmosphere (5.80).*

However, they were least satisfied with the following areas: *security staff respond quickly in emergencies (2.73), counseling staff care about students (2.92), adequate parking space (3.46), financial aid counselors are helpful (3.93), and competent student health services staff (3.99).*

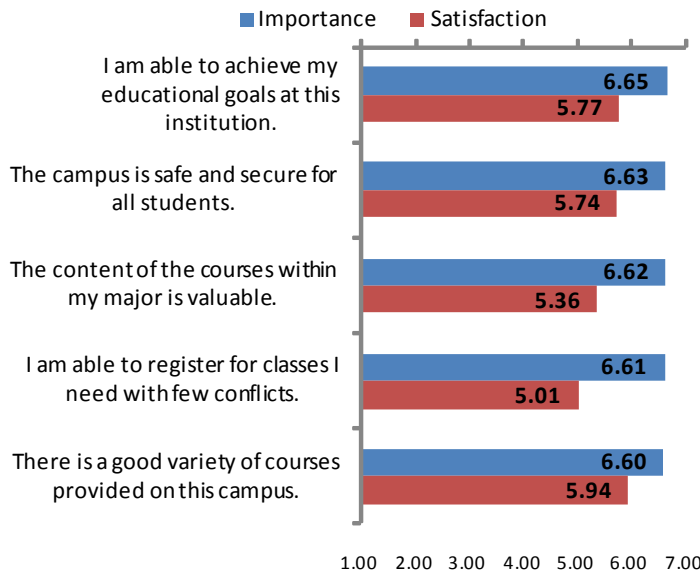
39.0% of freshmen reported that their college experience was about what they expected; 50.5% felt it was better and 10.5% felt it was worse.

Overall, 88.2% of freshmen were somewhat to very satisfied with their experience at UND.



What's most important to sophomores and what's not?

The below graph shows the top 5 important factors for sophomore students along with their level of satisfaction in those areas.



Satisfaction Scale: 7=very satisfied, 6=satisfied, 5=somewhat satisfied, 4=neutral, 3=somewhat dissatisfied, 2=not very satisfied, and 1=not satisfied at all.

Importance Scale: 7=very important, 6=important, 5=somewhat important, 4=neutral, 3=somewhat unimportant, 2=not very important, and 1=not important at all.

UND sophomores participating in the Noel-Levitz SSI reported similar aspects to the freshmen class. Mainly, that it is important to be able to register for classes, that the campus is safe, and that the courses offered are varied and valuable especially in their respective majors.

Not of high importance for UND sophomores are *participation in research activities (4.76)*, *library staff are helpful and approachable (4.94)*, *a variety of intramural activities are offered (4.98)*, *residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual (5.11)*, and *gender equity in intercollegiate athletics (5.17)*.

It is optimal when both importance and satisfaction factors align. As seen with the other student groups, there are often disconnects (gaps) between the factors. As students increase in their college level (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior) so does the average gap between importance and satisfaction within the top five importance factors. That is, the average gap is the least for freshmen and the greatest for seniors.

What are sophomores most satisfied with?

- *Gender equity in the classroom (5.96)*,
- *Variety of courses provided on campus (5.94)*,
- *Variety of wellness programs available on campus (5.91)*,
- *Comfortable campus atmosphere (5.85)*,
- *Feel a sense of pride about my campus (5.80)*.

Overall, 38.0% of sophomores reported that their college experience was about what they expected, 50.5% felt it was better and 11.5% felt it was worse.

Overall, 83.7% of sophomores were somewhat to very satisfied with their experience at UND.

UND sophomores reported being least satisfied with: *security staff respond quickly in emergencies (2.78)*, *counseling staff care about students as individuals (3.21)*, *the amount of student parking space on campus is adequate (3.58)*, *financial aid counselors are helpful (3.63)*, and *I have or plan to participate in research activities or conduct research projects*



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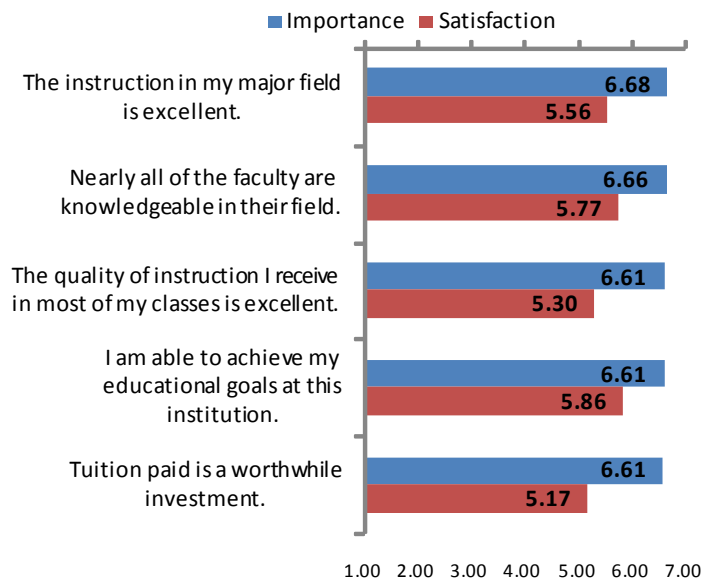
For more detailed information about the survey results please refer to **2008 Student Satisfaction Inventory:**
<http://www.und.edu/dept/datacol/reports/subFolder/ssi2008/ssi2008.htm>

What's most important to juniors and what's not?

Juniors felt that the quality of course instruction in their major and the knowledge level of their instructors were most important to them. They also reported their ability to achieve their educational goals and their tuition as a worthwhile investment as important aspects of their UND career.

Juniors ranked *reasonable residence hall regulations* (4.29), *concerned residence hall staff* (4.30), *participation in research activities & projects* (4.54), *the variety of intramural activities offered* (4.70) and *comfortable living conditions in the residence halls* (4.79) as the least important aspects they looked for in the University of North Dakota.

The below graph shows the top 5 important factors for juniors along with their level of satisfaction in those areas.



Importance Scale: 7=very important, 6=important, 5=somewhat important, 4=neutral, 3=somewhat unimportant, 2=not very important, and 1=not important at all.
 Satisfaction Scale: 7=very satisfied, 6=satisfied, 5=somewhat satisfied, 4=neutral, 3=somewhat dissatisfied, 2=not very satisfied, and 1=not satisfied at all.

Participating juniors reported high levels of satisfaction with *gender equity and equal opportunity in the classroom* (5.96), *the campus is safe and secure for all students* (5.89), *I am able to achieve my educational goals at this institution* (5.86), *there is a good variety of courses provided on this campus* (5.79), and *I feel comfortable with the atmosphere of this campus* (5.77).

However, they were least satisfied with the following areas: *security staff respond quickly in emergencies* (2.47), *counseling staff care about students as individuals* (2.90), *residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual* (2.91), *residence hall regulations are reasonable* (3.22), and *living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable* (3.28).

39.2% of juniors reported that their college experience was about what they expected; 45.2% felt it was better and 15.6% felt it was worse.

Overall, 79.4% of juniors were somewhat to very satisfied with their experience at UND.

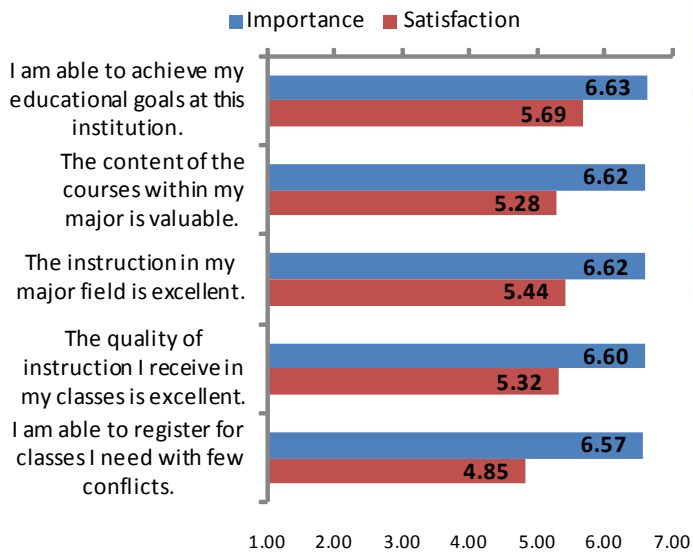


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What's most important to seniors and what's not?

The below graph shows the top 5 important factors for senior students along with their level of satisfaction in those areas.



Seniors seem most interested in the content and quality of their major, the instruction in those courses and the ability to reach their educational goals. This is not surprising as graduating seniors seek to find their place within an increasingly competitive job market.

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Satisfaction Scale: 7=very satisfied, 6=satisfied, 5=somewhat satisfied, 4=neutral, 3=somewhat dissatisfied, 2=not very satisfied, and 1=not satisfied at all.

What did UND seniors list as least important?

- Residence hall staff concerned about me as an individual (3.46)
- Residence hall regulations are reasonable (3.49)
- Comfortable living conditions in residence halls (4.13)
- Participation in research activities (4.36)
- Gender equity in intercollegiate athletics (4.44)

What are seniors most satisfied with?

- Gender equity in the classroom (5.73)
- Knowledgeable academic advisor (5.70)
- Ability to achieve academic goals at UND (5.69)
- Variety of wellness programs available on campus (5.68)
- Comfortable with campus atmosphere (5.67)

Overall, 76.3% of seniors were somewhat to very satisfied with their experience at UND and 73.7% would enroll again if they had to do it all over again.

All four class levels reported that the ability to achieve their educational goals at UND as an important aspect of their university experience. Satisfaction scores for this dimension ranged from 5.69 to 5.86 indicating that most students felt they were able to achieve their goals at UND with juniors reporting the highest level of satisfaction in this area. On the other hand, overall satisfaction diminished from 88.2% for freshmen to 76.3% for seniors.

Participating in research programs or conducting research projects was rated low in both the importance and satisfaction categories for UND students. This may indicate a need for faculty and staff to increase research visibility and motivate students to participate in research or to conduct their own. As studies show, this type of high-impact experience enriches the student's overall educational experience and leads to greater academic success. Participating in research can also provide necessary skills for future employment.



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