2010 Sophomore Satisfaction Survey

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University of North Dakota
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University of North Dakota
2010 Sophomore Satisfaction Survey
Executive Summary

As sophomores present a unique position in the student body of a university, the University of North Dakota’s Office of Institutional Research administers a Sophomore Satisfaction Survey (SSS) to garner the attitudes and opinions of these second year students. 2010 was the seventh administration of the SSS since its inception in 1993. Five hundred sophomores were invited to participate in the web-based survey via e-mail invitation in February of 2010. A total of 126 completed the survey for a response rate of 25%.

Sophomore respondents are generally quite satisfied with their UND experiences to date. When asked to rate their overall experience, 92% report being either very satisfied or satisfied; just 2% report being dissatisfied and none of the respondents reported being very dissatisfied. Eighty-four percent of sophomores responding are satisfied with their overall academic experience, and 98% are satisfied with their overall social experience.

Other highlights include:

• Large numbers of respondents indicate they spend minimal time on academic work; 81% of respondents report spending less than twenty hours per week preparing for class, with 10% reporting less than six hours per week.

• All sophomores responding indicate they are attending college to obtain a degree and increase their knowledge and understanding in an academic field. Career development goals are also high, with 95% indicating a goal of their college attendance is to improve knowledge for a career, to prepare for a career, and to formulate long-term career goals.

• Almost one-half (49%) indicate they are more engaged in courses where using technology is required. Males are significantly more likely to indicate such than females, 65% to 36%.

• Sophomores responding report increasing satisfaction with the academic advising they are receiving. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents are satisfied with their academic advising. Two-thirds are satisfied with the career advising received.

• As in prior surveys, those service areas where high numbers of respondents report satisfaction include the Wellness Center, the Memorial Student Union, Admissions, and the Chester Fritz Library. Also as indicated in prior surveys, the service areas with the lowest satisfaction ratings include the Parking Office, Campus Police, the Housing Office, and the Campus Bookstore.

• For the first time, the 2010 SSS asked about use of text messaging and social networking. Over one-half of respondents (56%) indicate they text message 10 or more times daily; just 5% indicate they never text message. Nearly all female respondents (98%) text message at least once daily. Just 4% of sophomore respondents never use social networking sites such as Facebook; 79% visit these types of sites at least daily.
UND has contributed very much to your personal growth in:

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<tr>
<td>Learning on your own</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>61%</td>
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<td>Working independently</td>
<td>54%</td>
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<td>Making informed choices</td>
<td>43%</td>
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<td>Defining and solving problems</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<td>Organizing your time effectively</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding/appreciating arts</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquiring a global perspective</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>Working cooperatively in group</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<td>Understanding &amp; applying math</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<td>Recognizing civic duties</td>
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<td>21%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Percent of sophomores satisfied or very satisfied

You have been satisfied or very satisfied with UND

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<tr>
<td>Quality of program in major</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>84%</td>
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<td>Challenge of courses in major</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>83%</td>
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<td>81%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interaction with other students</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Helpfulness of faculty in major</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<td>Personal safety on campus</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>78%</td>
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<td>Bottom 5 Areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuition cost</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposes for which fees used</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing regulations</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student government</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>55%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interaction with faculty out of class</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>56%</td>
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How Sophomores Report Spending Their Time

Activities having been done very often or frequently

Young Sophomores Satisfaction Survey

University of North Dakota
Office of Institutional Research
2010 Sophomore Satisfaction Survey
## Executive Summary

A comprehensive survey was conducted to assess the satisfaction of sophomore students at the University of North Dakota. The survey aimed to gather insights on various aspects of their academic experience, including demographics, educational plans, college-related goals, how time is spent, instructor priorities, satisfaction with campus offices, satisfaction with UND education, and overall satisfaction.

## Graphical Summary

The graphical summary provides a visual representation of the key findings from the survey. It highlights the areas where students are most satisfied and areas that require improvement.

## Table of Contents

- Executive Summary
- Graphical Summary
- Table of Contents
- UND 2010 Sophomore Satisfaction Survey
  - I. Introduction
  - II. Methods
  - III. Results
    - A. Demographics
    - B. Educational Plans
    - C. How Time Is Spent
    - D. College-Related Goals
    - E. Learning Methods
    - F. Technology
    - G. Instructor Priorities
    - H. Satisfaction With Campus Offices
    - I. Education Contributing To Growth
    - J. Satisfaction With UND Education
    - K. Overall Satisfaction
  - IV. Summary
  - V. Appendices
    - A. Sophomore Satisfaction Survey
    - B. Email Invitations, Reminders, and Follow-Ups
    - C. Response Timeline
    - D. 2010 Sophomore Satisfaction Survey Data
    - E. General Comments from Sophomores
    - F. Technology-Related Comments
      - F1. Students Engaged When Technology Used
      - F2. Students Require More Assistance on Technology
    - G. 2010 Data by College
    - H. How Time is Spent
      - H.2. Time Spent Discussing Academics
    - I. College-Related Goals
      - I.1. Historical Summary of College-Related Goals
      - I.2. Goals by College
    - J. Classroom Activities
      - J.1. Writing Assignments
      - J.2. Teaching Methods
    - K. Instructor Priorities for Students
    - L. Satisfaction with Service Areas
      - L.1. 2010 Individual Service Areas
      - L.2. 2010 Service Area Summary
      - L.3. Historical Use of Service Areas
      - L.4. Historical Satisfaction with Service Areas
2010 Sophomore Satisfaction Survey
Table of Contents (Continued)

V. Appendices (continued)........................................................................................................................................... 13

M. UND Contribution to Personal Growth ................................................................................................................. 110
  M.1. 2010 Contribution to Growth Summary ........................................................................................................... 110
  M.2. Historical Contributions to Growth ..................................................................................................................... 111

N. Satisfaction with Educational Experiences ............................................................................................................. 113
  N.1. 2010 Satisfaction with Experiences ................................................................................................................... 113
  N.2. 2010 Satisfaction Summary ............................................................................................................................... 116
  N.3. Historical Satisfaction with Experiences ............................................................................................................. 117
I. Introduction

Sophomores present a unique position in the student body of a university. They are no longer freshmen, where multiple support programs exist to ease the transition to college life; neither are they well-established within a major as upperclassmen are. This survey aims to determine the views of sophomore students at the University of North Dakota, by asking about their college goals, their satisfaction with their college experience, and finding out how they spend their time.

II. Methods

UND has administered a version of this particular survey to a sample of the sophomore class once every three years since 1993. The 2010 administration represents the seventh time the survey has been used. The Sophomore Satisfaction Survey (SSS) website (Appendix A) has been developed by UND’s Office of Institutional Research for implementation of the survey.

On February 5th, 2010, an invitation to participate (Appendix B) was e-mailed to a random sample of 500 UND sophomores. Three subsequent reminders (Appendix B) were e-mailed on February 8th, February 16th, and February 25th to increase participation. Each mailing contained both a link to the SSS website and passcode unique to each participant. A total of 126 surveys were completed for a response rate of 25%. A time line of responses can be found in Appendix C.

In order to track student responses over the course of their collegiate career, a second group of sophomores who had completed the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) as freshmen was also invited to participate. A total of 185 NSSE participants were identified and emailed the same messages as the random sample; 73 of these sophomores completed the SSS, for a response rate of 39%.

For purposes of this report, only those results of the initial randomly sampled 500 sophomores are evaluated. This ensures continuity of year-to-year comparisons of the results. Highlights from the NSSE group will be shared at a later date. Complete survey results can be found in Appendix D, with student comments provided in Appendix E. Appendix F contains comments provided to the technology-related questions of the survey. Both comment sections contain the survey comments from both the initial sample and the NSSE oversample. Appendix G lists survey responses by college. The remaining appendices, Appendix H through Appendix N, provide summaries of questions by survey section. These will be indicated in the following text.

III. Results

The Sophomore Satisfaction Survey is broken into various sections. Each grouping will be highlighted below.
A. Demographics

Over one-half of the respondents (55%) were female. The majority of sophomore respondents (73%) report their age as being 19 or 20, with 9% being 18; just 5% are older than age 25. Just 3% of respondents report being married. Nearly all respondents (95%) are white.

When looking at the academic home of the respondents, the College of Arts & Sciences lead the way with 28% of respondents; 6% report being undecided in their major. Over half of respondents live on campus, either in a residence hall (44%) or in University apartments (11%); one-third of respondents (34%) live off campus in the Grand Forks area. Just 5% of respondents report being commuters, living off campus outside the Grand Forks area.

When asked to report the state in which they attended high school, nearly all students report either North Dakota (44%) or Minnesota (36%). No other state was the high school home of more than 5% of respondents. Males are more likely to come from other states, with 66% of those respondents being from ND or MN compared to 89% of females. Just two respondents attended high school outside the United States.

Nearly all respondents (97%) are enrolled at full-time status (12 credits or more); leading the way are 24% of respondents stating they are registered for 15 credits, followed by 20% registered for 16 credits and 18% registered for 17 credits.

B. Educational Plans

Nearly all sophomores responding (97%) report their plan is to graduate from UND. Just 5 respondents say they plan to transfer to another college.

In 2008, George Kuh from the Association of American Colleges and Universities identified several high-impact educational practices that lead to gains in student outcomes. When sophomores are asked about several of these high-impact practices, UND respondents show varying levels of involvement or planned participation.

Just 8% of sophomores report they have or plan to participate in Integrated Studies while at UND. Over one-quarter (26%) of sophomore respondents say they have or plan to do study abroad; this follows the 2009 NSSE where 27% of respondents indicate study abroad plans. Over one-half of respondents (52%) plan to complete an internship or cooperative learning experience, while two-thirds (68%) have participated or plan to participate in community service or volunteer work.

C. How Time is Spent

Demands on college student time are ever changing. In an attempt to gauge how dedicated sophomores are to their studies, they are asked how much time they spend per week preparing for class, which includes activities such as studying, reading, writing, doing homework, working in labs, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities. Most sophomores (81%) replying to the survey spend less than twenty hours per week on academic work, with 10% reporting they spend
less than six hours per week. Females report spending more time on their studies than males, with 8% of females reporting less than 6 hours per week compared to 13% of males; 20% of females report spending more than 20 hours per week compared to 17% of males.

Research shows that working more than 20 hours per week is detrimental to a student’s academic progress, while working less than that amount can have a positive effect on academic outcomes. When sophomores at UND are asked how many hours they work per week, 18% state they work more than 20 hours, while over half (56%) report spending less than 10 hours per week working.

When asked about the amount of time they spend watching television, 65% of respondents say they spend less than 10 hours per week; 8% respond they spend more than 20 hours watching TV. Males report spending greater amounts of time watching TV than females.

With the advent of online technologies, for the first time the 2010 survey asked sophomores the frequency with which they undertook text messaging and social networking. Over half of respondents (56%) report they text message more than 10 times daily, while just 5% respond they never text message. Females are more likely to report text messaging, with 64% of female respondents reporting more than 10 text messages daily; 98% of females report text messaging at least daily.

When it comes to social networking sites, 79% of sophomores responding indicate they visit these sites at least daily. Just 4% indicate they never visit sites such as Facebook.

**Historical Comparisons**

It appears sophomores may be spending more time on academic work in 2010 than they did in 2007. When asked the approximate number of hours spent preparing for class, the percentage reporting fewer than 10 hours dropped from 52% in 2007 to 46% in 2010. A similar question asks students to report the amount of time they spent studying; the percent reporting they spend fewer than 10 hours studying dropped to 23% in 2010 from 32% in 2007. Appendix H summarizes sophomore respondents on spending time.

**D. College-Related Goals**

Sophomores are presented a list of sixteen goals that could be motivation for attending college. They are asked to indicate whether each of the sixteen items are a college-goal for themselves. Not surprisingly, all respondents indicate they have two of the sixteen college-related goals: *To increase my knowledge and understanding in an academic field* and *To obtain a degree.* Career development is also high on the list for survey respondents collegiate goals, as 96% indicate they have *To improve my knowledge, technical skill, and/or competencies for my job or career* as a goal, 95% indicate they have *To prepare for a new career* as a goal, and 94% indicate *To formulate long-term career plans and/or goals* is a goal.

The item sophomores are least likely to state as being a goal of their college experience is *To increase my participation in cultural and social events,* with 62% stating they have this goal. This is also the goal where the largest difference is seen between male and female respondents, with 73%
of females indicating this particular goal compared to 49% of males. Females report greater agreement to the listed goals in general when compared to male respondents; females score more agreement for all items except one: *To increase my self-confidence*, where 83% of females having this as a goal compared to 86% of males.

**Historical Comparisons**

As in prior surveys, the items *To increase my knowledge and understanding in an academic field* and *To obtain a degree* top the list of sophomore reported college-related goals (Appendix I).

The largest increase over the prior survey was seen in the goal *To improve my leadership skills*, which had 91% indicating this being a goal in 2010, an increase of 5% over what was indicated in 2007. As a matter of fact, this goal has seen a continual increase in the percentage of sophomores indicating it is a goal since 2002.

Career-related items have also been increasing college-related goals for UND sophomores. Both *To improve knowledge for a job/career* and *To prepare for a new career* have been continually increasing since 1999.

**E. Learning Methods**

Sophomores are quite likely to discuss their coursework with their fellow students; 99% of respondents report doing so at least occasionally. Over half report discussing assignments with classmates often, with 13% stating they do so very often and an additional 44% stating they do so frequently.

On the other hand, sophomores are less likely to report discussions with instructors. When asked to indicate the frequency they discuss their studies with an instructor, 12% of sophomores responding state never, and 14% state this happens frequently or very often. The largest portion of sophomores, 44%, report discussing their studies with instructors occurs occasionally.

While sophomores are quite likely to report discussing assignments with fellow students, fewer are likely to report they discuss current issues with their classmates. Under one-quarter of them (24%) indicate these issue discussions occur frequently or very often; 5% report they never discuss current issues with fellow students.

Frequent discussion of assignments among sophomores, however, doesn’t appear to lead them to study together. One-fifth of sophomore respondents (21%) indicate they frequently study with others rather than study alone. Twelve percent indicate they never study with others, and one-third (34%) indicate this occurs only occasionally.

When asked about the types of writing assignments they experience, sophomore respondents are most likely to report having been assigned 2-to-4 page papers, with 45% indicating they frequently or very often have this type of assignment; just 5% report never having these short writing assignments. Class journals are reported frequently by only 11% of respondents, and 5-page or longer papers are reported being frequent by 24% of respondents.

When asked about how often they experience eleven different teaching styles, the most popular is lecture, with over three-fourths (77%) of SSS respondents stating they experience
lecture very often. Role playing is the least experienced teaching method, with 44% of responding sophomores saying they never experience it.

**Historical Comparisons**

Reversing a trend that has been seen since 1999, the 2010 Sophomore Survey reflects an increase in the percentage of respondents stating they very often or frequently discuss class assignments with fellow students; 2007 recorded an all time low of 49% reporting this activity occurring frequently while in 2010 57% stated they frequently discussed coursework with fellow students. On the other hand, 2010 scored an all-time low (24%) for sophomores frequently discussing current issues with other students. A summary of historical responses regarding writing assignments and teaching methods can be found in Appendix J.

**F. Technology**

Nearly one-half of respondents (49%) agree that they are more engaged in courses that require them to use technology. When asked their agreement to being more engaged in courses requiring use of technology, males are significantly more likely than females to agree, with 65% of males agreeing they are more engaged compared to 36% of females. Appendix F.1 lists comments students made regarding being more engaged in coursework requiring technology use.

The Sophomore Satisfaction Survey results appear to indicate that UND does an adequate job of training students to use the technology required of them. Less than one-fifth of respondents (19%) agree that UND needs to provide more assistance on technology they are required to use. When asked to indicate areas where additional training is needed, respondents appear to be satisfied with Blackboard; one area where additional training may be needed is with using the research article search application at the Chester Fritz Library. These comments can be read in Appendix F.2.

With regard to online courses, 28% of sophomores responding say they are currently or have previously taken online courses at UND. In this study, female respondents are more likely to report having taken an online course when compared to males, with 32% of females and 20% of males reporting online course participation.

**G. Instructor Priorities**

Sophomores are asked to indicate the level of importance their instructors place on seven items related to student ability to successfully achieve in the classroom. Of the seven items asked, the greatest number of respondents indicate instructors are placing importance on *Encouragement of high-quality thinking and writing*, with 76% indicating instructors are putting great or much importance on this activity while just 3% say instructors are putting little importance on this activity.
The item that fewest sophomore respondents say instructors put importance on is *Concern about students as individuals*, with 14% saying instructors put little importance and 45% saying instructors put much importance in this area. Appendix K summarizes historical trends in instructor priorities as reported on the SSS.

**H. Satisfaction with Campus Offices**

Students are asked to rank twenty-six offices on campus, and they are given the options of indicating whether they didn’t know about the office, that they knew about the office but didn’t use it, and if they did use it, how satisfied they are with the services provided by that office. Appendix L provides detail information for this section.

Sophomores do not seek the use of those offices they are not familiar with. Offices with the highest numbers of students reporting they did not know about the office include Cooperative Education Office (23.1%), Learning Services Office (20.8%), and Veteran’s Services (18.5%).

It is not surprising to see the list of those offices most used; these include the Campus Bookstore (97.2%), Memorial Student Union (93.6%), Admissions (91.7%), Dining Services (90.8%) and the Wellness Center (89.0%). Offices that are least used tend to be those designed to cater to a specific minority campus population including Native American Programs (21.1%), Veteran Services (22.2%), Women’s Center (22.2%), Children’s Center (24.3%) and Disability Support Services (25.0%). It is interesting to note, however, that even those offices marked as being least use are still reported as being utilized by at least one-fifth of the sophomores responding to the survey.

When it comes to services rated highly by sophomore respondents, topping the list are Wellness Center (89.7%), Memorial Student Union (84.3%), Admissions (84%), Library (79.2%), and Student Health (75.7%). The above percentage indicates the portion of students who have stated they used the office and were satisfied or very satisfied. Low percentages of office users rate their services at the following as being satisfactory: Native American Programs (21.7%), Parking Office (29.8%), Children’s Center (30.8%), Women’s Center (33.3%). Many of these, with the exception of parking, have high numbers of users reporting they are neutral about the service received.

Students also have the opportunity to say they are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with a service office. Topping the list when it comes to dissatisfaction are Parking Office (41.7%), Campus Police (26.1%), Housing Office (20.0%), and Campus Bookstore (19.8%). Other offices had no sophomores reporting a level of dissatisfaction; these include Memorial Student Union, Career Services, Cooperative Education, International Center, Veteran Services, and Disability Support Services.

**I. Education Contributing to Growth**

Sophomores are asked to indicate how much twenty-eight different items have contributed to their educational growth at UND. Topping the list is *Learning on your own* of which 52% of
respondents indicate their UND education has contributed very much to their personal growth. Other items sophomores indicate their education contributes very much to is Working independently (48%), Making informed choices (47%), Organizing your time effectively (47%), and Defining and solving problems (47%).

At the opposite end, one-third of respondents report their UND education has contributed very little to their personal growth in Understanding and appreciating the arts. More than one-fourth of sophomores responding indicate their education contributes very little to their Using the library (28%), Understanding and applying mathematics in your daily activities (25%), and Recognizing your rights, responsibilities, and privileges as a citizen (25%).

Appendix M.1 summarizes the 2010 responses regarding UND’s experiences contributing to educational growth, while Appendix M.2 shows historical changes in the sophomore response to these items.

J. Satisfaction with UND Education

When asked to rate their satisfaction with twenty-two items related to the overall experience of being a college student, UND sophomore respondents report the highest satisfaction with the Overall social experience, with 85% being either very satisfied or satisfied. Other areas of high satisfaction include Quality of program in major (84%), Overall academic experience (84%), and Challenge of courses in your major (81%).

The items scoring the lowest percentages of sophomores reporting being satisfied are those with the largest percentages reporting being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. These include Tuition cost, with 29% being dissatisfied, Purposes for which student activity fees are used, with 21% reporting dissatisfaction, and Housing regulations, with 19% being dissatisfied.

UND sophomores are increasingly satisfied with the advising they are receiving, a trend mirrored by other surveys at UND. Nearly three-quarters (74%) of sophomores report being satisfied with the academic advising they receive, the highest percentage to date on the SSS. Similarly, two-thirds (66%) indicate they are satisfied with the career advising they receive; this is also the highest level of satisfaction to date seen on career advising. Undecided students, however, do not show this high level of satisfaction with advising; only 43% of undecided sophomore respondents indicate they are satisfied with both academic advising and career advising.

Two items were asked for the first time in 2010. The first is Tuition cost, which just 35% report they are satisfied or very satisfied and 29% are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. The second new item is Online course offerings. Seventy percent of the sophomores responding stated this item applied to them, and of these, 60% report they are satisfied with the experience while 32% are neutral and 8% are dissatisfied.

Appendix N summarizes levels of satisfaction with these educational experiences.
K. Overall Satisfaction

In a trend that is seen with most surveys at UND, large majorities of sophomores report being satisfied with their overall experience. Nine out of ten respondents (92%) report being satisfied, with 31% being very satisfied and 71% being satisfied. Just 6% are neutral regarding their overall UND experience and 2% are dissatisfied. No sophomores report being very dissatisfied.

All respondents from four colleges report being satisfied: Education & Human Development, JDO School of Aerospace Sciences, School of Engineering & Mines, and School of Medicine & Health Sciences. Sixty-three percent of Education respondents report being very satisfied. Undecided majors represent the largest percentage of respondents being dissatisfied, with 14% indicating such.

IV. Summary

As a general rule, UND sophomores responding to the Sophomore Satisfaction Survey are quite satisfied with their experiences here. Nearly all report being satisfied with their overall experience, as well as their academic experience and social experience.

While results are positive, there are still areas where improvement can be seen. Areas such as the Parking Office, Campus Police, Housing, and Student Financial Aid will probably always be seen somewhat negatively by students in that they generally apply rules which students are not always happy with, however these areas may look into options for selling their services in more student-friendly ways to improve their reputations. Areas servicing specific populations, such as Native American Programs, Veterans Services, Disability Support Services and the Womens Center may want to do more targeted surveying of their users to determine what levels of satisfaction they are truly providing.

Sophomores indicate they are generally happy with the advising they receive, however less than one-half of undecided majors responding indicate they are satisfied with their advisement. Efforts to guide these students into a major track may improve their opinion in the advising process.

Sophomores are also increasingly telling us that career planning is a main goal for their college education. This leads to increased emphasis on career advising and services provided by academic areas as well as Career Services and Cooperative Education.

It should be of concern to faculty and administration that students are reporting little time spent studying and on academic work. Emphasis in the classroom on the importance of studying may be required.

For the first time, UND asked sophomores to indicate their use of text messaging and online social networks. Results tell us these are important means for student connection and communication. Knowing this may play a key role in how faculty connect with students and may well affect teaching methods in the future. It is also key for service areas to realize this technology is becoming standard for students, and tried and true methods of communication may be outdated.
V. Appendices

Following is a list of the various appendices to provide additional information from the Sophomore Satisfaction Survey. The table of contents outlines the contents of each appendix section.