

## STUDENT VOICE PROJECT – PRELIMINARY TOP TEN FINDINGS

This summary presents preliminary findings from the Spring 2014 Student Voice Project. A total of 442 students took part in a survey designed and implemented by Noel-Levitz Higher Education Consulting (396 in the Student Satisfaction Inventory for on-campus students and 56 in the Priorities Survey for Online Learners for online-only students – an overall 7% response rate). Students rated each item on importance (from 1 "Not at all important" to 7 "Very important") and satisfaction (from 1 "Not at all satisfied" to 7 "Very satisfied"). The purpose of this document is to inspire data-based conversations about the Shoreline student experience -- possible discussion questions have been included. A more comprehensive report of the findings is forthcoming.

### 1. Overall, students are satisfied with Shoreline.

- Students gave only six of the 80 items an average satisfaction rating of 5.0 ("Somewhat satisfied") or lower.
- Ratings for 35 items were significantly higher than those from comparable schools; only three items were lower.
- 62% of students (including online only and in-person) were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience so far; 3% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

### 2. Students feel welcome at Shoreline, but feel less a sense of belonging.

- The majority of students (66%) indicated they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" that "Students are made to feel welcome on this campus."
- Less than half (48%) were satisfied/very satisfied with the item "Most students feel a sense of belonging here." This item was also one of the three that yielded significantly lower ratings than other comparable schools.
- Students in professional/technical programs gave slightly higher ratings ( $\underline{M}^1 = 5.34$ ) on this item than students in transfer programs ( $\underline{M} = 5.09$ ).

*What does it mean for students to feel they belong at Shoreline?*

### 3. Several academic services and resources received high praise; ratings about financial aid were low.

- Library resources and staff stood out with consistently high ratings (e.g.,  $\underline{M} = 6.02$  for "Library staff are helpful and approachable.")
- Students appreciated the accessibility and availability of computer labs ( $\underline{M} = 5.92$ ).
- Respondents who were military veterans ( $n = 27$ ) were highly satisfied with the Veterans Resource Center ( $\underline{M} = 6.61$  for "Personnel in the Veterans' Services program are helpful.")
- Ratings about the availability of financial aid and timeliness of award notification received two of the lowest satisfaction ratings ( $\underline{M} = 5.08$  and  $\underline{M} = 4.98$ ).

### 4. Students expressed satisfaction with the registration process, but are less satisfied with the class schedule.

- Two-thirds of students indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied that "The personnel involved in registration are helpful," and "Policies and procedures regarding registration and course selection are clear and well-publicized." ( $\underline{M} = 5.73$  and  $5.70$ ).
- Ratings were lower, particularly for transfer students, with regards to the item, "Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me." ( $\underline{M} = 5.44$  overall;  $\underline{M} = 5.73$  prof/tech;  $\underline{M} = 5.19$  transfer).

<sup>1</sup>  $\underline{M}$  indicates the average or mean rating.

5. Cost is the most important factor in deciding to enroll; for online students, convenience is more important.
- The top three most important factors were (1) cost; (2) availability of financial aid; and (3) academic reputation.
  - These are the same top three factors at other 2-year schools in the region.
  - For online learners, the top three factors were (1) convenience; (2) work schedule; and (3) distance from campus.

6. Ratings about the Shoreline academic experience were high.

- 74% of students were satisfied or very satisfied with their ability to "experience intellectual growth here."
- Faculty received high marks for knowledge in their fields ( $M = 5.86$ ) and availability outside of class ( $M = 5.84$ ).
- One of the only average ratings below 5.0 was for the item, "Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class," ( $M = 4.98$ ); the item, "Faculty are interested in my academic problems," also received a relatively low rating ( $M = 5.40$ ).

*How can Shoreline support students who are struggling academically?*

7. Ratings about support in setting and reaching educational goals were relatively low (5.4 and below).

- "This school does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals." ( $M = 5.41$ )
- "My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward." ( $M = 5.39$ )

*What would it take to support ALL students' educational goals?*

These items also showed some of the largest gaps between importance and satisfaction ratings.

8. General satisfaction ratings were significantly *lower* for international students than domestic students.

9. General satisfaction ratings were significantly *lower* for domestic students of color than domestic white students.

The explanation for these two findings is unclear, as there are no strong themes among the individual items for either comparison.

*What might explain these differences?*

At an item level, the most dramatic differences between these groups were in the domains of **instructional effectiveness and academic services**. For example, "I am able to experience intellectual growth here," (see Figure 1).

International students expressed dissatisfaction about the (un)availability of financial aid.

There was also a significant difference between domestic students of color ( $M = 5.66$ ) and domestic white students ( $M = 6.04$ ) in response to the item, "There is enough racial/ethnic diversity on campus for students to learn from each other's diverse perspectives."

10. MORE PARKING!

By far, the lowest rated item was "The amount of students parking space on campus is adequate," ( $M = 3.82$ ).

**Figure 1. Mean Satisfaction Ratings According to Race/Ethnicity and International Status**

