



Institutional Priorities Survey (IPS), Spring 2004

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Institutional Priorities Survey (IPS) closely parallels the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). SSI, a standardized survey instrument from Noel-Levitz, is designed to measure students' satisfaction with a wide range of college experiences, programs, and services. IPS assesses the priority that faculty, staff, and administrators believe the institution should place on the same range of student experiences.

IPS consists of 50 standard items and 10 additional ones supplied by St. John's University. Each item is expressed as a statement of expectation. As with SSI, two questions are asked for each item. One question is "How important is it that your institution meets the student expectation?" and the other is "What is your level of agreement that your institution is meeting this expectation?" The level of importance is on a 7-point scale (with 1 as NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL and 7 as VERY IMPORTANT), and the level of agreement is also on a 7-point scale (with 1 as STRONGLY DISAGREE and 7 as STRONGLY AGREE).

In Spring 2004, all St. John's full-time faculty, administrators, and staff were invited through email to fill out IPS online. The overall response rate is 24%, with 19% for faculty (Queens 18%, SI 30%), 37% for administrators (Queens 36%, SI 51%), and 15% for staff (Queens 15%, SI 7%). The data presented in this summary are aggregated by campus and by employee status. For Staten Island campus, the data for staff are combined with the data for administrators due to the fact that the number of staff participants (only 4) is too small for the data to be aggregated.

Both strengths and challenges for IPS have been identified with the same formula as for SSI. Strengths are the areas of high importance, high level of agreement, and small gaps (gap: importance rating minus agreement rating). Challenges are the areas of high importance, low level of agreement, and large gaps. The data are presented by campus, Queens and Staten Island separately. Within each campus, IPS data are first compared with SSI data, and then additional information from IPS is provided.

The identification of challenges and strengths is based on the distribution of ratings on importance and satisfaction (agreement for IPS), and gaps within each category (students, faculty, administrators, and staff) of survey participants, not based on the cross-category comparative data. Therefore, it is meaningful to look at an item identified as a challenge from SSI and then see whether this item is a challenge or a strength from IPS, and it is sometimes misleading to compare a rating from SSI with a rating from IPS (e.g., comparing an SSI satisfaction score with an IPS agreement score to see which category is more satisfied) because the ranges of ratings differ from category to category. The Spring 2004 data indicate that both importance and satisfaction ratings by students (SSI) are fairly lower than by faculty, administrators, and staff (IPS).

Queens Campus

1. IPS data compared with SSI challenges

Following are the 19 challenges from SSI by students, together with perceptions from IPS by faculty, administrators, and staff. The values are item mean scores, challenges are in blue and strengths in red, and a blank indicates that the item is not listed in IPS (In the column headings, I = Importance; S = Satisfaction; A = Agreement).

	Item	Students		Faculty		Adm		Staff	
		I	S	I	A	I	A	I	A
1	Financial aid counselors are helpful.	6.1	4.3	6.7	4.8	6.7	5.0	6.7	4.8
2	Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning.	6.2	4.1	6.6	4.5	6.6	4.8	6.6	4.8
3	I seldom get the “run-around” when seeking information on this campus.	6.1	3.6	6.4	4.0	6.4	3.8	6.7	4.2
4	Billing policies are reasonable.	6.1	3.6	6.2	4.2	6.2	4.5	6.4	4.6
5	Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.	6.2	4.5	6.7	5.5	6.7	5.1	6.8	5.4
6	I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.	6.5	4.2	6.2	4.5	6.3	4.6	6.6	4.5
7	Channels for expressing student complaints are readily available.	6.0	3.9	6.3	5.2	6.3	4.8	6.6	5.0
8	The campus staff are caring and helpful.	6.1	4.4	6.5	5.4	6.7	5.5	6.8	5.8
9	Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.	6.4	4.5	6.7	5.8	6.7	5.0	6.8	5.2
10	Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.	6.2	4.4	6.5	5.5	6.4	4.8	6.6	5.2
11	Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.	6.4	3.7	6.6	5.6	6.5	5.0	6.6	5.4
12	It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.	6.1	4.4						
13	My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward.	6.2	4.4	6.0	5.0	6.3	4.9	6.6	4.9
14	Faculty taking into consideration student differences as they teach a course.	6.1	4.3	5.9	5.1	6.0	4.6	6.3	5.0
15	This institution shows concern for students as individuals.	6.2	4.2	6.5	5.3	6.5	5.2	6.7	5.2
16	There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.	5.9	4.1	5.6	4.6	5.9	4.6	6.2	4.5
17	Adequate financial aid is available for most students.	6.3	4.0	6.3	5.3	6.5	5.2	6.5	5.0
18	Student activities fees are put to good use.	6.0	3.7	5.7	4.5	6.1	4.8	6.3	4.9
19	The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	6.0	2.7	5.5	4.0	5.8	4.1	6.1	4.5

The above table indicates that faculty, administrators, and staff are in agreement with students that these three items are challenges: financial aid counselors being helpful, the timing of announcing financial aid, and getting the “run-around”. Billing policies is identified as a challenge by both students and faculty; security staff’s response in emergencies as a challenge

by both students and administrators; conflicts in registering for classes and channels for expressing student complaints as challenges by both students and staff. It should be stressed that the item of campus staff being caring and helpful, a challenge for students, is perceived as a strength by administrators and staff. The same is true of the following three items, challenges for students, but identified as strengths by faculty: faculty being fair and unbiased, faculty providing timely feedback, and tuition paid as a worthwhile investment.

Additional challenges perceived by faculty, administrators, and staff:

	Item	Students		Faculty		Adm		Staff	
		I	S	I	A	I	A	I	A
1	The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent.	6.3	4.6	6.7	4.9	6.6	4.6	6.7	5.1
2	The University website is easy and convenient to use.			6.3	4.0	6.4	4.2	6.5	5.3
3	Academic support services adequately meet the needs of students.	5.9	4.4	6.4	4.7	6.5	5.1	6.6	5.2
4	Adjunct faculty are competent as classroom instructors.	6.1	4.6	6.4	4.4	6.5	5.0	6.6	5.7
5	The instruction in my major field is excellent.	6.5	4.8	6.7	5.3	6.7	5.0	6.6	5.3
6	Communication between the Administration and the student body is adequate.			6.1	4.2	6.4	4.6	6.6	4.6
7	My academic advisor is approachable.	6.4	4.9	6.7	5.5	6.6	5.2	6.8	5.1
8	Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	6.0	4.5	6.3	5.2	6.5	5.2	6.7	5.1

The quality of instruction, as indicated above, is perceived as a challenge by administrators, staff, and faculty members themselves. Communication between the Administration and the student body is identified as a challenge, which is consistent with student perception of unavailability of channels for expressing complaints. However, the competency of adjunct faculty perceived as a challenge by full-time faculty is not in agreement with the SIR II data. In SIR II, there is no difference in student ratings of full-time and adjunct faculty.

2. IPS data compared with SSI strengths

	Item	Students		Faculty		Adm		Staff	
		I	S	I	A	I	A	I	A
1	Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	6.3	5.0	6.5	5.6	6.3	4.8	6.6	5.2
2	Library resources and services are adequate.	6.1	4.8	6.6	4.8	6.5	5.2	6.6	5.5
3	St. John's Central is easy and convenient to use.	6.2	5.1	6.2	4.7	6.3	4.8	6.4	5.2
4	The campus is safe and secure for all students.	6.4	5.1	6.7	5.6	6.7	5.5	6.8	5.4
5	I have been able to socialize with other students on campus.	6.1	5.1						
6	Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable.	6.1	4.9	6.0	5.8	6.0	5.7	6.4	5.8
7	I have found quiet places to study on campus.	6.3	4.9	6.3	4.6	6.3	5.1	6.6	5.5
8	On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	6.2	4.9	6.2	5.6	6.3	5.4	6.5	6.0
9	This institution has a good reputation within the community.	6.1	4.8	6.5	5.0	6.4	5.2	6.6	5.5

Availability of faculty is perceived as a strength by both students and faculty. Library resources and services, a strength by both students (undergraduates) and staff, is a challenge by faculty, and it is also a challenge by graduate students (SSI data).

Additional strengths by faculty, administrators, and staff:

	Item	Students		Faculty		Adm		Staff	
		I	S	I	A	I	A	I	A
1	There is a strong commitment to racial harmony on this campus.	6.0	4.6	6.4	5.6	6.5	5.3	6.7	5.7
2	Major requirements are clear and reasonable.	6.3	4.8	6.6	5.9	6.5	5.5	6.6	5.4
3	My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.	6.3	4.6	6.5	5.7	6.6	5.3	6.7	5.2
4	Student disciplinary procedures are fair.	6.0	4.5	6.4	5.7	6.4	5.6	6.6	5.3
5	There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.	6.3	4.9	6.4	5.5	6.4	5.6	6.7	5.7
6	Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	6.1	4.4	6.5	5.4	6.5	5.4	6.7	5.8
7	Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	6.4	4.9	6.8	5.6	6.6	5.4	6.7	5.6
8	The content of the courses within my major is valuable.	6.5	5.0	6.6	5.5	6.6	5.2	6.7	5.5
9	I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	6.3	4.7	6.7	5.2	6.7	5.2	6.7	5.5

Racial harmony is identified as a strength by faculty, administrators, and staff. Both administrators and staff perceive that students are made to feel welcome on this campus.

Items with mixed challenges and strengths:

	Item	Students		Faculty		Adm		Staff	
		I	S	I	A	I	A	I	A
1	There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.	6.2	4.5	6.7	4.4	6.6	4.9	6.7	5.6
2	The personnel involved in registration are helpful.	6.2	4.5	6.4	4.8	6.4	5.4	6.7	5.5
3	Admissions staff are knowledgeable.	6.1	4.4	6.6	4.5	6.6	5.5	6.7	5.4

Commitment to academic excellence is perceived as a strength by staff, but as a challenge by both faculty and administrators. Personnel being helpful in registration is a strength by staff, but a challenge by faculty. Admissions staff being knowledgeable is a strength by administrators, but a challenge by faculty.

Staten Island Campus

1. IPS data compared with SSI challenges

	Item	Students		Faculty		Adm & Staff	
		I	S	I	A	I	A
1	There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.	6.2	4.6	6.5	4.0	6.8	4.2
2	I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.	6.4	4.6	6.6	4.8	6.6	5.3
3	Adequate financial aid is available for most students.	6.1	4.5	6.3	6.3	6.7	5.1
4	Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.	6.3	4.8	6.8	5.3	6.7	5.2
5	Channels for expressing student complaints are readily available.	5.9	4.5	6.2	5.9	6.7	5.0
6	Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.	6.1	4.8	6.8	6.0	6.9	6.2
7	Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	6.0	4.7	6.7	5.1	6.9	6.0
8	Billing policies are reasonable.	6.0	4.0	6.2	6.2	6.5	5.1
9	The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	6.3	2.6	5.8	3.2	6.2	3.6
10	Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	6.0	4.6	6.5	5.8	6.7	5.4
11	It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.	6.0	4.7				
12	Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course.	6.0	4.8	5.6	4.8	6.5	5.0
13	I seldom get the “run-around” when seeking information on this campus.	6.0	4.3	6.3	4.6	6.5	5.1
14	Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.	6.2	4.2	6.7	5.6	6.7	5.7
15	Student activities fees are put to good use.	5.9	4.2	6.1	4.3	6.5	5.4

The variety of courses is identified as a challenge by all four categories of survey participants, and conflicts in registering classes is a challenge by both students and faculty. Channels for expressing complaints and faculty’s treatment of individual students are challenges by students, administrators, and staff. Security staff’s response in emergencies is a strength by faculty, administrators, and staff, but for students it is a challenge. As with the Queens campus, students being made to feel welcome is a strength by administrators and staff, but a challenge by students.

Additional challenges by faculty, administrator, and staff:

	Item	Students		Faculty		Adm & Staff	
		I	S	I	A	I	A
1	Admissions counselors accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices.	5.9	4.8	6.6	4.7	6.8	5.3
2	The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent.	6.2	5.1	6.8	4.8	6.8	5.2
3	Adjunct faculty are competent as classroom instructors.	6.0	4.9	6.7	4.0	6.8	5.3
4	The instruction in my major field is excellent.	6.3	5.3	6.8	4.9	6.9	5.6
5	I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	6.1	5.0	6.8	4.8	6.9	5.5
6	There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.	6.1	4.9	6.7	4.3	6.8	5.5
7	Communication between the Administration and the student body is adequate.			6.4	4.3	6.6	5.5
8	Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable(adequate space, lighting, heat, air conditioning, telephones, etc.).	5.4	4.2	6.4	5.7	6.6	4.5
9	I have found places on campus to study or work in groups.	5.5	5.0	6.4	4.5	6.6	4.0
10	The University website is easy and convenient to use.			6.4	4.5	6.8	4.8

Faculty, administrators, and staff are in agreement on the following three challenges: admissions counselors' portraying the campus, the quality of instruction, and competency of adjunct faculty. Faculty members also perceive these four items as challenges: the instruction in the major field, students' intellectual growth, commitment to academic excellence, and communications between the administration and the student body.

2. IPS data compared with SSI strengths

	Item	Students		Faculty		Adm & Staff	
		I	S	I	A	I	A
1	The campus is safe and secure for all students.	6.3	5.4	6.9	6.2	6.8	6.2
2	My academic advisor is approachable.	6.4	5.6	6.6	5.8	6.8	5.8
3	Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	6.1	5.3	6.6	5.8	6.7	5.6
4	My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.	6.2	5.3	6.2	5.5	6.8	5.9
5	This institution has a good reputation within the community.	6.1	5.3	6.6	5.1	6.8	5.9
6	Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable.	6.1	5.2	6.1	6.1	6.4	6.3
7	I have been able to socialize with other students on campus.	6.0	5.2				
8	St. John's Central is easy and convenient to use.	6.0	5.1	6.3	5.1	6.7	5.4

The campus being safe and secure is identified as a strength by all four categories of survey participants. Academic advisors being approachable and faculty being available are strengths by both students and faculty. St. John's reputation in the community and academic advisors' concern about success of individual students are strengths by students, administrators, and staff.

Additional strengths by faculty, administrators, and staff:

	Item	Students		Faculty		Adm & Staff	
		I	S	I	A	I	A
1	Financial aid counselors are helpful.	5.9	4.8	6.7	5.8	6.8	6.4
2	My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major.	6.4	5.2	6.7	5.7	6.9	5.9
3	Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	6.3	5.2	6.8	5.8	6.8	5.9
4	Major requirements are clear and reasonable.	6.3	5.0	6.6	5.7	6.7	5.7
5	The campus staff are caring and helpful.	6.1	5.1	6.5	5.4	6.9	6.2
6	Admissions staff are knowledgeable.	6.1	4.9	6.8	5.5	6.8	5.8
7	Administrators are approachable to students.	5.9	5.0	6.4	5.5	6.9	6.5
8	This institution shows concern for students as individuals.	6.1	4.9	6.3	5.5	6.9	6.1

Conclusion

The IPS data reveal the perceptions of faculty, administrators, and staff, on student college experiences. As the data indicate, their perceptions are in agreement with students' on some of the items and different in others.

Both SSI and IPS data identify the following as strengths: availability of faculty (Q & SI); campus being safe and secure, academic advisors being approachable, academic advisors being concerned about success of individual students, and St. John's reputation in the community (SI).

Perceived as challenges by both SSI and IPS are: channels for expressing student complaints and conflicts in registering classes (Q & SI); financial aid counselors being helpful, timing of announcing financial aid, billing policies, getting "run-around", and security staff' response in emergencies (Q); variety of courses, availability of financial aid, and faculty being fair and unbiased (SI).

It should be addressed that there are several items that have been identified as challenges by students but perceived as strengths by faculty, administrators, or staff whose services are directly related to these items. The items of the campus staff being caring (Q) and students being made to feel welcome (SI), for instance, are challenges by students, but perceived as strengths by administrators and staff. The following three items, which are closely related to faculty, are challenges by students on Queens campus, but perceived as strengths by faculty: faculty being fair and unbiased, faculty providing timely feedback, and tuition paid as a worthwhile investment. Such items should be stressed, together with other challenges, and targeted for intervention.

Not all the findings from SSI are reflected in IPS. The bigger performance gaps for resident students than for commuters, for instance, are not revealed in IPS data. Such challenges should be also included in the intervention plan.