

St. John's University
Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), Spring 2007

Executive Summary

This executive summary consists of the following six parts:

- 1 Highlights of Survey Results
- 2 Introduction to the Survey
- 3 Summary of the Scale-Level Results and Overall Satisfaction
- 4 Strengths
- 5 Challenges
- 6 Conclusion

Part 1. Highlights of Survey Results

Following are some highlights of the 2007 SSI survey results:

- Satisfaction ratings by both St. John's undergraduate and graduate students increased while importance ratings remained similar, resulting in a smaller gap for most areas.
- The increase in satisfaction ratings by undergraduates was mainly due to the fact that resident students became as satisfied as commuters while resident students were less satisfied in 2004.
- Technology-related areas stood out as strengths, including St. John's Central, campus email, use of technology in the classroom, and computer labs.
- Other strengths include faculty and academic advisors being available to students, St. John's reputation within the community, well-maintained campuses, etc.
- The performance gap was reduced most in Safety and Security.
- Improvement has been made for the majority of the challenges identified in 2004, but some of them remained to be challenges in 2007. Such challenges include "run-around" and tuition paid as a worthwhile investment.
- Students from other states are not as satisfied as those of New York State. For the past few years the retention rate of out-of-state students has been fairly lower than that of in-state students, while the proportion of out-of-state students in the freshman body has become larger (from 17% for Cohort 2004 to around 25% for Cohort 2007).
- In general, satisfaction ratings by St. John's students were slightly lower than by students in private institutions.

Part 2. Introduction to the Survey

The Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), a standardized survey instrument from Noel-Levitz, is designed to measure students' satisfaction with a wide range of college experiences, programs, and services. It allows institutions to set priorities that are closely aligned with those of the students, pinpoint institutional strengths, and identify challenges in need of improvement.

The survey consists of 73 standard items and 10 additional ones supplied by St. John's University. Each item is expressed as a statement of expectation. For each item, students are asked to rate both the level of importance (a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 as NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL and 7 as VERY IMPORTANT) and level of satisfaction (a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 as

NOT SATISFIED AT ALL and 7 as VERY SATISFIED). The difference in the importance and satisfaction ratings is considered as a performance gap.

In spring 2007, St. John's classes were randomly selected from the following three groups: 1) Undergraduates on Queens Campus (840 participants, 7% of student population), 2) Undergraduates on Staten Island (384, 19%), and 3) Graduate students of both Queens and SI campuses (385, 10%). For all the three groups and at both the University and college/school levels, the samples are fairly representative of student populations in terms of gender and ethnicity. Three similar studies were conducted in 1997, 1999, and 2004.

Both strengths and challenges have been identified in this summary. Strengths are the areas of high importance, high satisfaction, and small gaps. Challenges are the areas of high importance, low satisfaction, and large gaps, and they are the areas in need of improvement. Part 3 summarizes the scale-level results (the 83 items are grouped into 12 scales) and overall satisfaction; Part 4 highlights the areas of strength; Part 5 presents areas of challenge; and Part 6 is the conclusion. The appendix presents detailed data for St. John's University and private institutions (for comparison purposes).

Part 3. Scale-Level Results and Overall Satisfaction

For undergraduates on Queens Campus, the importance ratings in 2007 were consistent with the ratings in 2004, while the satisfaction ratings increased from 2004 to 2007, resulting in a narrower performance gap in all the scales, especially in Safety and Security (a gap from 1.9 in 2004 to 1.4 in 2007). The data indicate that the reduced gaps resulted from the fact that the satisfaction ratings by resident students (living on campus) became close to the ratings by commuters in 2007 while ratings by resident students were lower than by commuters in 2004.

For undergraduates on Staten Island, satisfaction ratings also increased, while importance ratings did not change much from 2004 to 2007. The performance gap in Safety and Security was reduced most, from 1.8 in 2004 to 1.1 in 2007. In 2004, the satisfaction ratings by resident students were fairly lower than ratings by commuters, but in 2007 the difference between residents and commuters became smaller due to the fact that the increase in satisfaction ratings by residents was larger than by commuters.

For undergraduates on both Queens and Staten Island campuses, the out-of-state students were not as satisfied as the in-state (New York State) or international students.

For graduate students on both campuses, satisfaction ratings also became slightly higher in 2007 than in 2004 while importance ratings remained similar.

The overall satisfaction rating, one of St. John's institutional success measures, increased from 4.4 in 2004 to 4.6 in 2007 for Queens undergraduates (4.6 for in-state, 4.3 for out-of-state, and 5.3 for international students in 2007); increased from 4.8 in 2004 to 5.0 in 2007 for Staten Island undergraduates (5.1 for in-state, and 4.1 for out-of-state students). St. John's 2007-08 target is 5.3. This rating for the four-year private institutions increased slightly from 5.1 in 2004 to 5.2 in 2007.

Part 4. Areas of Strength

I. Undergraduates on Both Queens and SI Campuses

Following are the areas of strength for undergraduates on both Queens and Staten Island campuses in 2007, and for comparison purposes, St. John's 2004 data and the data for four-year private universities are also presented (Items with the four-year private universities data missing are St. John's additional items.) . The values in the table are the mean satisfaction scores.

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Queens | | Staten Island | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|--------|------|---------------|------|--------------|------|
| | 2004 | 2007 | 2004 | 2007 | 2004 | 2007 |
| 80. I use my campus email account regularly. | 4.7 | 5.6 | 4.7 | 5.4 | | |
| 79. St. John's Central is easy and convenient to use. | 5.1 | 5.4 | 5.1 | 5.4 | | |
| 7. The campus is safe and secure for all students. | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.4 | 5.6 | 5.5 | 5.5 |
| 81. (2007) The use of technology in the classroom is adequate. (2004) The use of technology by faculty in the classroom has been helpful to me. | 5.0 | 5.2 | 5.1 | 5.2 | | |
| 51. This institution has a good reputation within the community. | 4.8 | 5.2 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.5 | 5.5 |
| 72. On the whole, the campus is well-maintained. | 4.9 | 5.1 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.5 | 5.5 |
| 75. I have been able to socialize with other students on campus. | 5.1 | 5.1 | 5.2 | 5.3 | | |
| 6. My academic advisor is approachable. | 4.9 | 5.1 | 5.6 | 5.6 | 5.4 | 5.5 |
| 65. Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours. | 5.0 | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.2 | 5.4 | 5.5 |
| 26. Computer labs are adequate and accessible. | 4.8 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 5.5 | 5.1 | 5.3 |

On Staten Island campus, additional areas of strength are:

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Staten Island | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|---------------|------|--------------|------|
| | 2004 | 2007 | 2004 | 2007 |
| 14. My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual. | 5.3 | 5.4 | 5.1 | 5.2 |
| 2. The campus staff are caring and helpful. | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.4 |
| 3. Faculty care about me as an individual. | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.2 | 5.3 |
| 74. I have found quiet places to study on campus. | 5.3 | 5.3 | | |
| 32. Tutoring services are readily available. | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.2 | 5.2 |

II. Graduate Students on Both Queens and SI Campuses

Graduate students on both Queens and Staten Island were sampled as one group, and the following are the areas of strength in 2007:

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Queens & SI Campuses | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|-------------------------|------------|--------------|------|
| | 2004 | 2007 | 2004 | 2007 |
| 79. St. John's Central is easy and convenient to use. | 4.9 | 5.6 | | |
| 68. Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field. | 5.1 | 5.5 | 5.6 | 5.7 |
| 72. On the whole, the campus is well-maintained. | 5.1 | 5.4 | 5.5 | 5.5 |
| 65. Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours. | 5.2 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 5.5 |
| 82. There are enough classes offered after 2 p.m. on weekdays here. | 5.0 | 5.3 | | |
| 51. This institution has a good reputation within the community. | 5.0 | 5.3 | 5.5 | 5.5 |
| 81. (2007) The use of technology in the classroom is adequate. (2004) The use of technology by faculty in the classroom has been helpful to me. | 5.0 | 5.3 | | |
| 61. Adjunct faculty are competent as classroom instructors. | 4.7 | 5.3 | 5.0 | 5.1 |
| 45. Students are made to feel welcome on this campus. | 4.8 | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.4 |

Part 5. Areas of Challenge

I. Undergraduates on Both Queens and SI Campuses

Following are the areas of challenge for undergraduates on both Queens and Staten Island campuses in 2007, and for comparison purposes, the 2004 data are also presented. The values in the table are the mean satisfaction scores.

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Queens | | Staten Island | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|------------|------------|---------------|------------|--------------|------|
| | 2004 | 2007 | 2004 | 2007 | 2004 | 2007 |
| 11. Billing policies are reasonable. | 3.6 | 3.7 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.5 |
| 57. I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus. | 3.6 | 3.9 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.6 |
| 66. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment. | 3.7 | 3.9 | 4.2 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.7 |
| 73. Student activities fees are put to good use. | 3.7 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.6 | 4.4 | 4.5 |
| 17. Adequate financial aid is available for most students. | 4.0 | 4.1 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.7 | 4.7 |
| 12. Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning. | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.8 |
| 34. I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts. | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 4.8 | 4.9 |
| 77. There is a variety of internship opportunities for students. (2007 only) | | 4.4 | | 4.9 | | |
| 47. Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course. | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.1 |
| 49. There are adequate services to help me decide upon a career. | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.9 | 5.0 |
| 29. It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus. | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 5.2 | 5.3 |

For Queens campus, additional areas of challenge are:

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Queens | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|--------|------|--------------|------|
| | 2004 | 2007 | 2004 | 2007 |
| 38. There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria. | 4.1 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 4.1 |
| 5. Financial aid counselors are helpful. | 4.3 | 4.2 | 4.8 | 4.9 |
| 59. This institution shows concern for students as individuals. | 4.2 | 4.3 | 5.1 | 5.2 |
| 19. My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward. | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.8 |

For Staten Island campus, additional areas of challenge are:

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Staten Island | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|---------------|------|--------------|------|
| | 2004 | 2007 | 2004 | 2007 |
| 21. The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate. | 2.5 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 3.6 |
| 69. There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus. | 4.6 | 4.8 | 5.1 | 5.2 |
| 41. There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus. | 4.9 | 5.0 | 5.3 | 5.4 |

II. Out-of-state Undergraduates on Both Queens and SI Campuses

Satisfaction ratings by out-of-state students are fairly lower than by in-state (New York State) students for most survey items, and that's true for both Queens and Staten Island campuses, while practically there is no such difference between in-state and out-of-state students of four-year private institutions.

Following are areas of challenge specific to out-of-state residents on both campuses in 2007:

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Queens | | Staten Island | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|----------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | In State | Out of State | In State | Out of State | In State | Out of State |
| 100. Rate your overall satisfaction with your experience here thus far. | 4.6 | 4.3 | 5.1 | 4.1 | 5.2 | 5.2 |
| 45. Students are made to feel welcome on this campus. | 4.8 | 4.2 | 5.1 | 4.4 | 5.4 | 5.3 |

For Queens campus, additional areas of challenge are:

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Queens | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | In State | Out of State | In State | Out of State |
| 40. Residence hall regulations are reasonable. | 3.6 | 2.8 | 4.6 | 4.6 |
| 41. There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus. | 4.7 | 4.4 | 5.4 | 5.3 |
| 48. Admissions counselors accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices. | 4.4 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 4.8 |
| 78. I have found the Public Safety staff helpful and approachable. | 4.5 | 4.2 | | |

For Staten Island campus, additional areas of challenge are:

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Staten Island | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | In State | Out of State | In State | Out of State |
| 30. Residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual. | 4.7 | 4.0 | 4.8 | 4.9 |
| 37. I feel a sense of pride about my campus. | 4.9 | 4.2 | 5.1 | 5.0 |
| 20. The business office is open during hours which are convenient for most students. | 5.0 | 4.5 | 5.1 | 4.9 |

III. Graduate Students on Both Queens and SI Campuses

Graduate students on both Queens and Staten Island were sampled as one group, and the following are the areas of challenge in 2007:

| Survey Item (Items with satisfaction ratings in BLUE are strengths, in Red are challenges.) | Queens & SI Campuses | | 4-yr Private | |
|--|----------------------|------|--------------|------|
| | 2004 | 2007 | 2004 | 2007 |
| 21. The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate. | 3.3 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 3.6 |
| 17. Adequate financial aid is available for most students. | 4.1 | 4.1 | 4.7 | 4.7 |
| 11. Billing policies are reasonable. | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 4.5 |
| 57. I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus. | 4.1 | 4.2 | 4.5 | 4.6 |
| 71. Channels for expressing student complaint are readily available. | 4.1 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.6 |
| 12. Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning. | 4.2 | 4.3 | 4.7 | 4.8 |
| 73. Student activities fees are put to good use. | 4.0 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.5 |
| 5. Financial aid counselors are helpful. | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.8 | 4.9 |

| | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 20. The business office is open during hours which are convenient for most students. | 4.5 | 4.4 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| 66. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment. | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 4.7 |
| 77. There is a variety of internship opportunities for students. (2007 only) | | 4.5 | | |
| 28. Parking lots are well-lighted and secure. | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| 49. There are adequate services to help me decide upon a career. | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 5.0 |
| 36. Security staff respond quickly in emergencies. | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.8 |
| 74. I have found quiet places to study on campus. | 4.5 | 4.8 | | |
| 19. My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward. | 4.7 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.8 |

Part 6. Conclusion

Satisfaction ratings by resident students increased from 2004 to 2007 while importance ratings did not change much, resulting in a reduced performance gap for most areas. The performance gap in Safety and Security was reduced most on both campuses. Technology-related areas were identified as St. John's strengths, including St. John's Central, campus email, use of technology in the classroom, and computer labs. Other strengths include faculty and academic advisors being available to students, and St. John's reputation within the community, etc.

In general, there is not much difference in performance gaps among ethnic groups except that satisfaction ratings by Hispanic students are slightly higher than average. Students with higher GPAs are more satisfied than those with lower GPAs. Students whose first choice was St. John's are more satisfied than other students. Importance ratings by female are higher than by male, and satisfaction ratings by female are also slightly higher. Therefore, it is difficult to draw the conclusion that female students are more satisfied than male students.

Students from other states are not as satisfied as those of New York State. Special attention should be given to this group of students. Research literature reveals that student satisfaction is linked to their retention, and St. John's data support that. For the past few years the retention rate of out-of-state students has been fairly lower than that of in-state students, while the proportion of out-of-state students in the freshman body has become larger (from 17% for Cohort 2004 to about 25% for Cohort 2007).

Improvement has been made in most of the challenges from 2004 to 2007, such as the issue of "run-around" and tuition paid as a worthwhile investment. There is still room, however, for further improvement. As compared to four-year private institutions, our performance gaps are still fairly large.