Winter Assessment of the Student Experience
Executive Summary

March 2009
Requests for additional or custom reporting of survey findings can be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs Survey Administration. Some findings and analysis is restricted to university personnel. All findings are subject to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) reporting restrictions and requirements.
Participant Profile

In February 2009, a web-based survey was administered to enrolled UW Tacoma students to measure their general attitudes and satisfaction with UW Tacoma. Invitations to participate in the survey were sent via email to 3032 students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In total, 310 responses (10%) were submitted with 247 undergraduates (80%) and 63 graduate students (20%) responding.

Female respondents numbered 222 (73%), males 82 (27%), with one other. The ethnicity breakouts for primary identification were: 68% Caucasian, 11% Asian, 6% Multiracial, 4% African American, 3% Hispanic, 2% American Indian, 1% Hawaiian / Pacific Islander, and 6% were not indicated. Twenty-five percent of the respondents are primary care givers for one or more children. Sixty-six percent of respondents said their father’s highest level of education is less than a four-year degree, and 73% stated their mother’s highest level of education is less than a four-year degree. Fifteen percent said they are either military veterans or the child/spouse of military. Nine percent of students claim a sexual orientation other than heterosexual.

Twenty-two percent of respondents wish to obtain a doctorate or professional degree, and 80% say they would have attended another four-year institution if they had not been admitted to UW Tacoma. Only 8% said they would have attended a community college.
Student Satisfaction

Campus Environment

In general, students expressed high levels of satisfaction with their experience at UW Tacoma. In fact, 92% of respondents say they are likely or very likely to recommend UWT to someone. Ninety-five percent of respondents agree or strongly agree relationships with other students are friendly and supportive, 93% agree UWT has a positive environment for students, an equal 93% say UW Tacoma has an environment free of harassment, 92% say UWT employees are courteous and professional, and 87% feel valued and respected.

However, 37% do not feel they can influence university policy on issues that affect them.

Comments:

• “It is a good school, with great professors and it is in a local area for me.”
• “Need to stop sharing buildings with SOTA. Many days WCG does not seem like UW should be.”
• “...I have felt out of place, been harassed for my conservative views, and have been subjected to embarrassment from professors...”
• “The younger students are unkind and disrespectful to the older students. This has made my experience at UWT unpleasant at times.”

Instruction

Most respondents felt they were academically prepared coming to UWT, with the highest unprepared marks found in study skills, research and library skills, and science. In general, students rank their academic experience and relationships with faculty highly; 92% agree or strongly agree they are meeting their educational objectives. Ninety-five percent of students say professors have expert knowledge in their subject area, while 90% say professors treat and grade students in an objective and consistent manner.

However, 30% are not satisfied with the variety of major areas of study offered at UW Tacoma, and 16% do not feel that faculty utilize technology in a way that enhances learning.

The most interest in potential new programs was shown in a BA in Criminal Justice and the Pre Medical, Veterinary, Dental, or Pharmacy concentration. A high number of students (18) also said they would major in an MA in Urban Studies if offered.
Twenty percent of students claim to have not utilized academic advising.

The largest percentage of students prefer midday classes (11am-2pm) followed by 9am-10am start times. Twenty-five percent of respondents absolutely prefer evening start times (6pm-8pm). Students overwhelmingly prefer the two classes per week format with a class size preference of 21-30 students per class followed by 31-40 student class size.

Ninety percent of respondents felt that UW Tacoma classroom facilities contribute to a positive learning environment.

Students are split on wanting to see more hybrid and distance learning opportunities with 1/3 high importance, 1/3 some importance, and 1/3 no importance.

Comments:
- “the benefit of small class sizes and the benefit of class participation...”
- “Small community and the professors know their students.”
- “I think there needs to be more evening and online classes offered.”
- “Adding more majors, psychology or even neurobiology which is why I would like to transfer to the Seattle campus.”

Student Services and Facilities

Satisfaction was generally high for services and facilities; in fact, 92% of students said UW Tacoma buildings and grounds promote a positive learning environment, and 93% of respondents have used the UW Tacoma website with a satisfaction rate of 83% among those using the web. High levels of satisfaction were also seen with veterans services (95%), the flex pass (86%), the emergency alert notification (83%) – although many students voiced complaints about not wanting to receive Seattle campus alerts - on-campus employment (83%), the Teaching and Learning Center (79%), disability support services (79%), ASUWT, SAB & RSO (75%), and financial aid and scholarships (75%).

However, parking is the main source of dissatisfaction among students with 59% of those utilizing parking expressing dissatisfaction, while 36% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that the UW Tacoma Bookstore's hours, inventory, and prices support and meet their needs. The campus fitness center had a dissatisfaction rate of 36%.

Seventy-two percent feel that participation in student activity programs helps students develop new friends and relationships at UW Tacoma, while 70% say that participation in student government, clubs/organizations, and recreational programs help students prepare for a career. Only 33% feel that peer advising has a positive effect on student success (with 65% not sure).
Student usage of programs and facilities varied greatly by type of service. The highest use was for library facilities with 83% (however 16% of respondents say the library hours do not fit well with student study and resource access requirements), followed by computer facilities (58%), copy and mail services (52%), the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) (38%), media services (34%), and student publications (31%).

The Recreation Center (Longshoremen’s Hall) (26%), involvement in ASUWT, SAB & RSO (23%), co-curricular programs (21%), the Career Development Center (19%), Leadership programs / workshops (18%), laptop checkout (17%), flex pass (17%), campus fitness center (16%), Student Counseling Center (16%), and on-campus employment (16%) all showed from 16% - 26% usage.

Housing, health and wellness, student judicial services, ombudsman, and childcare assistance all received 5% or less usage among respondents. However, sixty-eight students (23%) not currently living in on-campus housing expressed an interest in doing so, while 24% said they might take advantage of childcare services in the future.

Across the board, student time preference for utilizing services is the afternoon, except for the campus fitness center, which showed a higher preference for evening usage.

Asked what activities they would remain on, or return to, campus for, the top choice was a club related to a major (42%) followed by scholarly lecture (38%) and contemporary issues lecture at 36%. Arcade/ video games (11%), religious presentations (12%), and fraternities/sororities and fashion shows (16%) scored the lowest.

Sixty-two students (45%) said they want to perform or participate in an acting company, and 33% said they would participate in a dance troupe.

Comments:

- “The library should have extended hours as well as the MAT”
- “The cashier’s office was closed during lunch time which may be the only chance students have to use the services, once again not very student friendly.”
- “One thing that stands out are the chairs. They need to be replaced.”
- “The only problem I have with UWT is PARKING PLACES!!! Too expensive and too lack of it.”
- “... it doesn't make sense to have 1 hr parking all along the University when most classes are around two hours...
- “...I take night classes and I am a female, I fear the dangers of walking to my car after class in the dark...”
- “Most importantly the campus is very safe. The security team does a world class job.”

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• “I’d like to stop receiving security notices about the Seattle campus.”
• “Similar to the map on campus, have something displaying where (all services) are located…”

**Enrollment and Attendance**

Eighty-four percent of respondents say the online registration process is easy to use, and 82% say the admissions process is easy to understand and navigate. However, 40% of students disagree or strongly disagree that classes they want to take are usually available for registration.

Eighty-seven percent said that access to financial aid (loans, scholarships, grants, work-study) enables students to succeed.

Commuting appears to have a high negative impact on attendance as 64% percent of respondents said that parking has a negative impact on attendance, 57% traffic congestion, 56% gas prices, 48% road construction, and 31% said distance to campus has a negative impact on attendance. Moreover, where three out of four students drive alone to campus, only 18% claim to have an on-campus parking permit. Roughly 12% of the respondents utilize public transit.

**Comments:**

- “the only drawback has been the amount of classes listed as options that never actually appear in any schedule.”
- “The class selection does not allow any choice.”
- “On-line registration process: There should be a wait list for classes.”
- “The most challenging aspect of my experience at UW Tacoma has been the commute.”