

Chapter 19: Student Interview Project Supplements

Appendix A

Quality of Life Screening Questionnaire

Instructions: The items below describe feelings and experiences relating to quality of life. For each item, please rate your overall level of satisfaction during the past six months by circling the most appropriate response. Interviewers will discuss your responses with you to understand how attending Truman State University may influence your quality of life.

During the past six months, how satisfied have you been overall with your...

1. academic achievement (acquiring skills and knowledge, earning acceptable grades, etc.)?
very dissatisfied dissatisfied neutral/unsure satisfied very satisfied
2. transportation (availability and ease of travel for shopping, to recreational activities, to visit friends and family, etc.)?
very dissatisfied dissatisfied neutral/unsure satisfied very satisfied
3. social life (number and quality of friends and social activities, etc.)?
very dissatisfied dissatisfied neutral/unsure satisfied very satisfied
4. mood and emotions (low stress, anxiety, depression; and high enthusiasm, interest, energy, etc.)?
very dissatisfied dissatisfied neutral/unsure satisfied very satisfied
5. health (fitness, wellness vs. illness, availability of medical care, etc.)?
very dissatisfied dissatisfied neutral/unsure satisfied very satisfied
6. recreational activities (availability, fun, frequency, variety of activities, etc.)?
very dissatisfied dissatisfied neutral/unsure satisfied very satisfied
7. finances (amount of debt, ability to pay bills, money to live comfortably, etc.)?
very dissatisfied dissatisfied neutral/unsure satisfied very satisfied
8. housing (size of living space, comfort, safety, privacy, etc.)? This question applies to all students, including students living on and off campus.
very dissatisfied dissatisfied neutral/unsure satisfied very satisfied
9. food and meals (quality, availability, variety, quantity, etc.)? This question applies to all students, including students living on and off campus.
very dissatisfied dissatisfied neutral/unsure satisfied very satisfied

Appendix B

Process for Identifying High Points and Low Points from the Quality of Life Screening Questionnaire for the Interview

1. A member of the Interview Project team collects the questionnaire from the student and identifies the high and low points of quality of life for use in the interview.
2. Items with ratings of *satisfied* and *very satisfied* may serve as high points. The two items with the highest satisfaction ratings serve as high points. If fewer than two items have ratings of *satisfied* or *very satisfied*, then the interview will include one or no high points. In the event of a tie among items as high points, items are chosen randomly to break the tie (see step 4 below).
3. Items with ratings of *very dissatisfied*, *dissatisfied*, and *neutral/unsure* may serve as low points. The two items with the lowest satisfaction ratings serve as low points. If fewer than two items have ratings of *very dissatisfied*, *dissatisfied*, *neutral/unsure*, then the interview will include one or no low points. In the event of a tie among items as low points, items are chosen randomly to break the tie (see step 4 below).
4. Resolving ties: Read the digits from left to right in the random number table below. (Cross out digits as you read them so that they are not used more than once.) Select the item or items whose numbers first match the random digits.

Random Digits

2039 2993 4362 6363 2914 4955 6364 5237 6456 5561
0176 2425 2968 3834 6077 4302 3499 9938 7231 2136
2161 1365 2764 7836 1584 2421 4247 2930 0783 9989
0407 1760 7048 1929 9034 0242 0753 4851 9465 0791
0055 7981 7760 2215 3323 4727 8884 8066 7965 3939
0726 2104 9164 6275 5464 4073 1715 3215 7883 8087
2475 9583 8713 1445 2702 4952 4307 5796 2913 0589
0686 1266 4341 9760 9608 5773 7394 9333 4752 8395
4223 4033 3734 8221 2055 5131 0065 1626 7742 5806
9596 5241 3230 3269 4836 9776 2894 5740 1557 2515
1581 5007 6906 8933 9981 3175 4979 4525 5334 6038
6558 6350 1273 6164 7125 1481 3084 1517 4748 0956
1974 7635 1129 0593 7963 3817 0148 1377 5165 6568
8671 4147 7231 3509 9032 4233 9087 3328 9044 3152
0979 6984 8428 7697 8859 5363 2984 2649 9244 7035
0635 0334 7219 7422 9571 1053 5954 4040 5777 2440

Appendix C

Interview Instructions and Questions

Instructions Read by Interviewers to Interviewees

[Co-interviewers alternate reading the paragraphs below.]

We would like to learn about students' experiences at Truman State University. In particular, we would like to know how attending Truman State influences your quality of life. You just completed a questionnaire measuring quality of life. Based on your responses, we will ask you about high points and low points in your quality of life.

[Show the interviewee the questionnaire with the topic questions marked.]

Because Truman State is in Kirksville, you may consider both the University and the town in your answers. In addition, we encourage you to give specific examples whenever possible. Specific answers are more helpful in understanding what the University does well, and what we need to improve to increase students' quality of life. For example, instead of saying that her class schedule is "bad," it would be more helpful for a student to tell us that she has difficulty walking between distant classrooms in 10 minutes.

The Interview Project team will combine many students' answers in reports to the University administration, faculty, and staff. Interview reports will not include your name, so you may speak freely. You are not required to share information that you prefer to keep private or feel uncomfortable discussing.

What questions do you have before we begin?

[Clarify and reassure, as needed.]

2010 Student Interview Project Questions

Quality of Life: High Point A

Questionnaire Item Number ____ Topic _____

1. On the questionnaire, [topic] was an area where you reported relatively **high** quality of life. In what ways does attending Truman State contribute to satisfaction with your [topic]? Please give specific examples.

Quality of Life: High Point B

Questionnaire Item Number ____ Topic _____

2. On the questionnaire, [topic] was an area where you reported relatively **high** quality of life. In what ways does attending Truman State contribute to satisfaction with your [topic]?

Quality of Life: Low Point A

Questionnaire Item Number ____ Topic _____

3. On the questionnaire, [topic] was an area where you reported relatively **low** quality of life. In what ways does attending Truman State limit satisfaction with your [topic]? Please give specific examples.

Quality of Life: Low Point B

Questionnaire Item Number ____ Topic _____

4. On the questionnaire, [topic] was an area where you reported relatively **low** quality of life. In what ways does attending Truman State limit satisfaction with your [topic]?

Final Question

5. We have talked about specific areas of quality of life, but now I would like to ask about students' quality of life in general: Suppose that your younger friend or relative is trying to choose a college to attend. What are the most important things for prospective students to know about quality of life at Truman State University?

Appendix D

Interview Question Coding Categories and Examples

Contributors to High Points in Quality of Life (Interview Questions 1-2)

I. Social Life

- A. Campus organizations are positive social experiences
 - 1. “Met a lot of people when I joined a service sorority”
 - 2. “Hall Senate is a great way to network”
 - 3. “Greek life provides a lot of social opportunities”
 - 4. “I’ve met a lot of people playing humans vs. zombies”
- B. Campus and Kirksville community are inviting
 - 1. “Writing stories for the newspaper gave me a chance to meet local people”
 - 2. “Kirksville is a friendly community with a small town feel”
 - 3. “People at Truman are friendly”
 - 4. “Walking across campus, I always recognize people I know”
 - 5. “The quality of people here makes social life good”
 - 6. “Faculty and staff are so helpful”
- C. Meet friends through academic endeavors
 - 1. “I met some of my best friends in class due to small size and open discussion”
 - 2. “Small classes make it easy to meet people and you see them around campus”
- D. Campus living environment conducive to building/maintaining relationships
 - 1. “I met a lot of people living in the dorms”
 - 2. “There is a friendly atmosphere living on campus – it connected my with lots of people”
 - 3. “I’m still living with my freshman year roommate”
 - 4. “Res Life works at creating a good social environment”
- E. College life aids in forming and maintaining friendships
 - 1. “College activities make it easy to find people with shared interests”
 - 2. “Truman week was a good way to introduce people to college and to make friends”
- F. Campus provides many entertainment opportunities
 - 1. “There are a lot of social events going on”
 - 2. “There are always fun things to do at Truman”

II. Academic Achievement

- A. Personal academic experience is rewarding
 - 1. “Grades really reflect student learning”
 - 2. “Worked hard and got good grades – felt rewarding, given the difficulty of classes”
 - 3. “Extensive writing makes learning more valuable”
 - 4. “Happy with good, solid As”
 - 5. “Learning to think in different ways”
 - 6. “Possible to earn good grades if you try”
- B. Rewarding faculty/staff interactions

1. "Quality faculty and small school – can talk with professors personally"
 2. "Teachers are great but challenging"
 3. "Teachers have clear, reasonable expectations"
 4. "Teachers want you to do well"
 5. "Office hours are helpful"
- C. Interactions with peers conducive to academic success
1. "Positive atmosphere with high level, achieving students creates positive competition"
 2. "Everyone is focused and it's easy to find study partners"
 3. "Good support system"
- D. Academics applicable to future goals
1. "Well prepared for graduate school"
 2. "Good reputation for grad school and career"
 3. "Gain knowledge that helps with daily life – good application of material"
- E. Physical qualities conducive to academic achievement
1. "Professors know my name so I can't disappoint them"
 2. "Small classes encourage me to be prepared to be called on"
- F. Quality/variety of courses available
1. "Variety of diverse courses offered in the liberal arts and in the major"
 2. "Good quality of classes in the major"
 3. "Varied learning activities"
 4. "Required classes are useful and interesting"
 5. "High quality education – learn a lot in classes"
 6. "Liberal arts, good variety"

III. Recreational Activities

- A. Town and campus provide many recreation activities
1. "There are always events going on"
 2. "Rec center is open long hours – flexible and convenient"
 3. "Hiking at Thousand Hills is fun"
 4. "Rec center has good classes – pilates and yoga"
 5. "Good areas for biking and running"
- B. Organizations on campus provide recreational activities
1. "Enjoy participating in TSODA"
 2. "Great experience being on a sports team"
 3. "Involved with equestrian team year-round"
- C. SAB provides enjoyable recreational activities
1. "Enjoy the concerts and the movies"
 2. "SAB offers lots of cool events"

IV. Finances

- A. Affordable tuition
1. "Truman gives great scholarships"
 2. "FAFSA loans and grants help make it affordable"
 3. "Even for out-of-state students, lower cost than private Iowa colleges"
 4. "Good quality at low cost"

B. Low cost of living

1. "Rent in Kirksville is cheap"
2. "Living expenses are low – houses, movies, restaurants"
3. "Free or cheap SAB activities"

C. Few chances to spend money

1. "Small town, so not a lot of things to spend money on"
2. "Campus and town provide lots of free activities – don't need to spend money"

V. Housing

A. Housing facilitates positive interpersonal relationships

1. "Living in dorms I made lots of good friends"
2. "Enjoyed dorm living – very convenient"
3. "Recent renovations have improved dorms"
4. "I love living with my roommate"
5. "Dorm living is fun"
6. "Off-campus living has less rules – dry campus"

B. Positive physical attributes of housing

1. "Kirksville is a safe place to live"
2. "Dorms provide wide variety of options – apt., suite, and community styles"
3. "Enjoy small dorm – close-knit group"
4. "Off-campus housing has reasonable quality"

C. Affordable housing

1. "Low cost of living – cheap housing"
2. "Can find housing that's fairly priced and reasonable quality"

D. Convenient location of housing

1. "Lots of housing close to campus"

VI. Health

A. Campus provides healthful opportunities

1. "Health center is good"
2. "Physical activities are available in clubs and classes"
3. "University counseling is accessible"
4. "Helpful instructors at rec center – awesome facility"
5. "Salad bar in dining halls"
6. "Cafeteria offers nutrition facts"
7. "Health center is helpful"

B. Healthy personal habits

1. "Involved with cheerleading practice"
2. "I always walk briskly"
3. "Participate in several dance clubs"
4. "Physically active – on cross country team"

C. Community provides healthful options

1. "Plays Frisbee golf"
2. "Swine flu shots at Adair county Health Department"
3. "Hospital was helpful"

4. "Found a good doctor in Kirksville"
- D. Interpersonal interactions foster healthy lifestyle
 1. "On the cross-country team – friends on the team"
 2. "Exercises with friends at the rec center"
 3. "Works out with friends on weight lifting team"

VII. Food and Meals

- A. Positive off-campus dining experiences
 1. "Cook and eat healthier off-campus"
 2. "Good grocery options in Kirksville"
 3. "Local farmers' market on Saturdays"
 4. "Food is cheaper off campus"
- B. On-campus food is convenient and affordable
 1. "Can buy supplies in bulk at end of the semester from Sodexo"
 2. "Lots of options – SUB, C-store, dining hall"
- C. Good quality of on-campus dining
 1. "Clean environment in dining halls"
 2. "Fresh and quality food in the cafeterias"
- D. Good variety in on-campus dining
 1. "Dorms have Jewish and vegetarian options"
 2. "Dining hall has wide variety of salad bar options"
 3. "Good options in the SUB"

VIII. Transportation

- A. Able to access transportation
 1. "I have a car"/"I have a bicycle"
 2. "Easy to bike or walk where I need to go"
 3. "My friends have cars"
 4. "Small town – nothing too far"
 5. "Nice to have a car as a freshman"
- B. Campus and community are easy to navigate
 1. "Everything on the campus is close and easy to get to"
 2. "Easy to get around, even in bad weather"
 3. "Enough time to get between classes"
- C. Kirksville is in close proximity to important locations
 1. "Able to go home easily"
 2. "Not a bad drive from St. Louis"

IX. Mood and Emotions

- A. Positive interpersonal relationships
 1. "Lots of people I can depend on – friends, dorm community, faculty"
 2. "Good relationships with friends and teachers"
 3. "Friends and family are good support"
- B. Enjoyable college experience
 1. "Service learning and flexibility in majors helps"
 2. "Good events for first year students"

- C. Manages life stressors effectively
 1. “Work out everyday”
 2. “Good services for stress relief – like scream before finals”
 3. “Helps to plan things in detail”
- D. Environment is conducive to positive mood
 1. “Small campus feels like a neighborhood”
 2. “Beautiful campus”
- E. Strong ties to religion/spirituality
 1. “Helps going to Life Church – getting to know Kirksville residents”
 2. “Lots of cool people at the Newman Center”

Contributors to Low Points in Quality of Life (Interview Questions 3-4)

I. Social Life

- A. Lack of social connection with those around them
 1. “Everyone else is from STL and knows each other”
 2. “LGBT community is small and limited”
 3. “Didn’t feel welcome in club meetings”
- B. Lack of social outlets
 1. “Few party options other than frats – no under 21 bars”
 2. “Too much of a push toward Greek life”
- C. Social life not a priority
 1. “Lack of time for social life”
 2. “Class work and job take too much time”

II. Academic Achievement

- A. Rigorous courses
 1. “As a top-ranked school, a lot is expected of you”
 2. “Some classes are really difficult – creates stress and a low GPA”
 3. “Required to take classes that don’t match skills or interests – lower grades”
 4. “A lot of reading in many classes”
- B. Difficult professors
 1. “Some profs don’t stick to syllabus”
 2. “Difficult to learn from poor professors”
 3. “Some professors are condescending”
- C. Lack of effort put forth by student
 1. “Living in a frat house has a lot of distractions”
 2. “Didn’t try hard enough last semester”
- D. Lack of pre-Truman preparation
 1. “Tough transition from high school”
 2. “Difficulty adapting since English is 2nd language and expectations are different”
- E. Lack of support from faculty/staff
 1. “Limited research opportunities for foreign students”
 2. “There are too many prerequisites for Accounting – would help to test out of Math”

3. "Profs want small classes and won't give overrides"
4. "Advisors aren't very helpful"
5. "Headaches with registration office – holds on accounts, complicated adds & overrides"

F. Other

1. "Not a great semester due to illness"
2. "Truman isn't very parent-friendly for students with kids"

III. Recreational Activities

A. Lack of variety in Kirksville

1. "Not many Kirksville events"
2. "Limited options with movie theatres and bars"

B. Lack of variety at Truman

1. "Lots of activities but don't meet her interests – not enough alternative music"
2. "Rec center is crowded"
3. "Intramurals not competitive enough"

C. Student doesn't utilize on and off-campus facilities/services/activities

1. "Time constraints for Rec classes"
2. "Too cold most of the year for outdoor activities"

D. Lack of time

1. "I'm too busy with academics to participate in Global Issues or Lyceum"
2. "Sports team takes up a lot of time"

IV. Finances

A. Personal finances not satisfying

1. "Truman is inexpensive but travel home is expensive"
2. "Running out of savings living off campus"
3. "Spend more money on the few available activities"
4. "Worried about debt"

B. Difficulty finding job (on- and off-campus)

1. "Hard to fit work into academic schedule"
2. "Hard to manage both part-time and scholarship jobs"
3. "Difficult to get off-campus jobs"

C. Difficulty financing education

1. "Not Truman's fault, but hard to manage paying students loans without parents' help"
2. "Hard to find money for Study Abroad"
3. "Out of state is double in-state price – required loans"
4. "Books are very expensive and sometimes don't use them"

D. Negative experiences with Financial Aid office

1. "Miscommunication about renewals"
2. "Lost paperwork"

E. Other

1. "Ready to be financially independent from parents"
2. "Vending machines should accept meal plans"

V. Housing

A. Physical space issues

1. "Paper thin walls in Centennial – lack of privacy"
2. "Dorm room is small"
3. "Campus apartments are tiny and poorly lit"
4. "Poor water quality – blue floor in shower"
5. "Safety issues in dorm"
6. "Construction in Ryle is noisy"
7. "Dorm is loud – no respect for quiet hours"

B. Interpersonal issues

1. "Messy roommate"
2. "Incompatible with roommate"
3. "No friends in dorm"
4. "Too many roommates"
5. "Poor random assignment of roommates"

C. Off-campus issues

1. "Limited rental options – only 5 or 6 groups in control – hard to find a decent place to live"
2. "Safety issues and burglars even though I'm not very far from campus"

VI. Health

A. Poor personal health choices

1. "Good opportunities for exercise but I don't use them"
2. "Tendency to snack on junk food"
3. "More time for exercise in high school"

B. Health care resources on campus and in community

1. "Need better support systems for students with illnesses"
2. "Health Center not open on weekends"
3. "ER is expensive, so often goes without medical care"
4. "Hard to get appointments at health center"
5. "Local hospital not as good as in larger cities"
6. "Has to go home to deal with more serious medical issues – no local specialists"

C. Campus doesn't provide healthful opportunities

1. "Rec center hours not always convenient"
2. "Lack of healthy food choices in SUB"
3. "Not enough spaces in exercise classes"
4. "'All you can eat' is too tempting"

D. Stress/Other

1. "Stress-related health issues because of academic challenges"
2. "Seasonal depression – lots of stress"
3. "Too much academic work to find time for exercise"

VII. Food and Meals

A. Poor quality of on-campus dining

1. "Not enough room to sit in renovated MO hall dining room"

2. "Would be willing to pay more for higher quality and selection"
3. "Sodexo has low quality food"
- B. Lack of variety in on-campus dining
 1. "Not enough options for those who prefer organic or local diet"
 2. "Not a lot of time options in dining halls"
 3. "Dorm food gets boring – especially soups and entrees"
 4. "Salad bar as only vegetarian option – need more fruit"
- C. Cafeteria alternatives not appealing
 1. "Cafeteria isn't very healthy"
 2. "Craves homemade food"
 3. "Would like to know where food comes from"
 4. "SUB is better quality but expensive"
- D. Off-campus issues
 1. "Kirksville restaurants don't offer healthy choices"
 2. "Cooking class would help – limited cooking skills"

VIII. Transportation

- A. Student lacks vehicle
 1. "Have to rely on friends for rides"
 2. "There isn't a good bus system"
 3. "Hard to go anywhere from Kirksville"
- B. Lack of public transportation
 1. "Public transportation is too expensive"
 2. "It's hard to find a ride home"
- C. Kirksville is far from important locations
 1. "Kirksville is in the middle of nowhere"
 2. "Barnett is too far from campus"
 3. "Downtown should be more student friendly"

IX. Mood and Emotions

- A. Stress due to academic work load
 1. "Lots of assignments and tests clumped together"
 2. "Stressful classes – especially if take over 15 hours"
 3. "Couldn't get into required classes"
 4. "Teachers expect too much – think theirs is the only class"
 5. "Too many LSP requirements"
- B. Difficulty adjusting to college life
 1. "Faculty members have different expectations – hard to figure out"
 2. "Hard to adjust to college and be away from family"
 3. "Homesick and far from home"
- C. Habits that negatively affect mood
 1. "Cycles between happy and stressed"
 2. "Bored in residence halls"
 3. "Anxiety disorder – trouble with stress management"
 2. "Need better time management"
- D. Stress due to need for achievement

1. "Big pressure to have a 4.0"
 2. "Trying to finish in 4 years means taking too many classes a semester"
 3. "Taking too many difficult classes – trying to do too much"
 4. "Want to do everything well"
- E. Extracurricular activities
1. "Requirements of cheerleading conflict with classes"
 2. "Hard to balance classes, clubs and social life"
 3. "Study Abroad followed by heavy course load to catch up"
 4. "Easy to take on too many activities and stress out"
- F. Stressful interpersonal relationships
1. "Advisor not pleasant to work with – source of stress"
 2. "Little time to meet people due to sports and academics"
 3. "Friends are also stressed – negative impact"
 4. "Counseling of limited value – hard to talk to someone you don't know"
 5. "More personal issues than Truman issues"
- G. Other
1. "Frustration at Truman due to lack of information – financial aid, lost papers, lack of communication between departments and advisors"

General Comments on Quality of Life for Prospective Students (Interview Question 5)

- A. Strong community (easy to make friends, see familiar faces around campus/classes)
1. "The school is its own community."
 2. "Favorite thing about Truman is the community"
 3. "Small, close, being able to see a familiar face. Welcoming feeling."
 4. "Friendliness makes you want to be here".
- B. Truman State University provides many activities/organizations
1. "Organizations for everything and everyone"
 2. "More variety of campus events than some larger state or private schools"
 3. "SAB does a good job with events"
 4. "Easy to make friends – always things to do"
- C. Good faculty (e.g., accessible and approachable)
1. "Can really get to know the professors"
 2. "Teachers aren't intimidating"
 3. "Helpful professors and staff – willing to work one-on-one"
 4. "Everyone works together (faculty and staff) to create a good experience"
 5. "Good teacher-student relationships"
 6. "Faculty great – high quality of education"
- D. Strong academic reputation
1. "Get out what you put into it"
 2. "High level of academic achievement – good reputation"
 3. "Satisfying to work hard and do well"

4. "Truman offers a wide variety of LSP courses that aren't a waste of time – broadly focused liberal arts program"
5. "Fantastic academics, Truman degree=good job"
6. "Need an open mind – willing to think critically"

E. Close proximity of resources (things are within walking distance)

1. "Town is small and comfortable"
2. "Everything is close by – walking distance"
3. "Easy to get to classes"
4. "Feeling of small community with family atmosphere"

F. Advice: Get involved, take initiative to find social life (seek out other people and organizations)

1. "Important to get involved"
2. "Easy to make friends and make your own fun – small size facilitates connections"
3. "Good to be away from big city distractions – can concentrate on studies"
4. "Has learned to love Kirksville – a lot going on if take advantage"
5. "Feels welcome here – professors know your name"
6. "Can trust people – people really care about your feelings"

G. Academically difficult/stressful

1. "Academic stress, but valuable preparation"
2. "Time management is important – keep grades up!"
3. "Classes are challenging but you get a lot out of it"
4. "Classes are tough but if you work with your teachers you will be OK"
5. "Expect less sleep and more study time – competitive atmosphere"

H. Affordable

1. "Good education for low cost"
2. "Reasonable tuition – low cost of living"
3. "Get a lot for your money"
4. "Good financial help for international students"

I. Small class size

1. "Small classes – easy to get to know professors and students"
2. "Small classes means good quality of discussions"
3. "Laid-back environment"

J. Lack of activities in Kirksville and from the University

1. "May not have the number of social activities of a bigger city – slower place, but can make your own fun"
2. "A lot of people are only concerned about grades – not much school spirit"

K. Other

1. "Sometimes hard to find friends"
2. "Can't imagine going anywhere else"

3. "Renovations are helpful – evidence administration listens to student concerns"
4. "Problems dealing with study abroad and financial aid office"
5. "No bus system"
6. "HUB is a great place to study"
7. "Good recycling – green efforts"
8. "Good library resources"
9. "Food's not great on campus"
10. "Weather can be frustrating"
11. "Attractive campus aesthetically"