

Chapter 8: Student Affairs Assessment

Every year the Office of Student Affairs collects information from a variety of surveys given to students. The data obtained by this office is very thorough, covering many aspects of students' lives. The surveys reported in this chapter include the Missouri College Health Behavior Survey (MCHBS), the EBI Apartment Assessment, the EBI Resident Assessment, the EBI Student Staff Assessment and the EBI Campus-wide Student Climate/Diversity Assessment. The information collected is too comprehensive to completely report here; therefore, this chapter will highlight some of those aspects most directly related to student learning.

Missouri College Health Behaviors Survey

In the spring of 2013, 527 Truman students participated in the Missouri College Health Behavior Survey (MCHBS). This survey allows comparisons between Truman students and students in other Missouri institutions. This survey collects a variety of information, such as drug and alcohol abuse, mental health, relationships, gambling and attitudes towards Truman's policies.

One aspect of particular interest to Truman students is dealing with stress. In response to "how stressed have you felt in the past two weeks," Truman students were less likely than the average college student to report experiencing little stress or minimal stress. The modal response for Truman students fell into the "stressed but managing" category. Nearly 19% reported feeling "overwhelmed," and over 3% reported unbearable stress. Truman students' responses also indicated that this stress had a larger impact on their academic and personal lives than average college students. Only 13.5% reported stress having no impact on their academic life.

To cope, many Truman students felt that they could confide about their personal issues to family, friends, the counseling center, religious advisors, residence life staff, the health center, an academic advisor or a professor. Nearly 90% of students thought that they could go to on-campus peers or friends, and 87% said they could turn to off-campus friends for support. Truman students were less likely to approach law enforcement or campus security. Truman students were also less somewhat less likely to resort to a dating partner or spouse for personal issues.

EBI Assessments

The Office of Student Affairs routinely oversees surveys that address the living environments of students such as surveys published by Education Benchmarking, Inc. (EBI). The EBI assessments allow Truman to compare our performance on a number of factors against three comparison groups. These comparison groups include six institutions we are allowed to select, all of the institutions participating in the assessment that are included in our Carnegie Classification, and all of the institutions participating in the assessment regardless of Carnegie Classification. Truman has consistently exceeded all three comparison groups on the majority of the factors for each of the surveys described below. The EBI also provides information that allows Truman to compare our performance against aspirational goals established by relevant professional organizations. The information below focuses on Truman's performance against these aspirational goals.

This year, the EBI Apartment Assessment was sent to 209 students living in on-campus apartments. Of those students, 113 responded. Progress toward aspirational goals established by professional organizations is summarized below:

Truman met the goals with the following factors: safety and security, tolerance of fellow residence, sense of community, respect of fellow residence, apartment staff, policies and overall satisfaction.

Truman was close to meeting the goals with the following factors: contracts and leases, apartment environment, and overall program effectiveness.

Truman did not meet the goals with the following factors: apartment condition, personal interactions, services and facilities provided, selection criteria, diverse interactions, activities, time management/studying/problem solving, personal growth and overall learning.

Similarly, the EBI Resident Assessment was sent to 2,372 students living in the residence halls. From this sample, 1,201 students responded. Progress toward aspirational goals established by professional organizations is summarized below:

Truman met the goals with the following factors: safety and security, tolerance of fellow residence, satisfaction with the university, hall student staff, facilities, sense of community, room assignment and change policies, respect of fellow residence, services provided, personal interactions, and overall satisfaction.

Truman was close to meeting the goals with the following factors: room/floor environment, diverse interactions, hall programming, personal growth, dining services, overall learning, and overall program effectiveness.

Truman did not meet the goals with the following factors: Time management/studying/problem solving.

The EBI Student Staff Assessment was sent to 91 students, 74 of which responded.

This survey is geared to a slightly different population; these participants are not only Truman students but also staff members. Progress toward aspirational goals established by professional organizations is summarized below:

Truman met the goal with the following factors: Management skills of supervisors, supervisor support, job experience, diverse interactions, student staff selection process, respect of residence, empathy, personal competence, self-knowledge and skills, training, collaboration within staff, practical competence, tolerance of residence, overall learning, overall satisfaction, and overall program effectiveness.

Truman was close to meeting the goals with the following factors: Types of training.

Truman did not meet the goals with the following factors: Job demands and compensation.

Finally, the EBI Campus-wide Student Climate/Diversity Assessment was sent to 5,178 students. Of those students, 889 responded. As the title suggests, the survey explores the degree of diversity on Truman's campus. Progress toward aspirational goals established by professional organizations is summarized below:

Truman met the goal with the following factors: value of contribution in the classroom, expressions of insensitivity from faculty/staff, inclusive environment, peer relationships and overall program effectiveness.

Truman was close to meeting the goals with the following factors: academic achievement/personal development, inter-group relations, camaraderie among racial/ethnic groups, expressions of insensitivity from students, prior experience with ethnic diversity, and learning and development.

Truman did not meet the goals with the following factors: attitudes of differing populations, ability to work effectively, accessibility of resources for disabled students, special considerations for minorities, prior experience with gender diversity, financial standing, political/social ideology, religious identification.