“Would You Choose This Institution Again?”
What Drives Student Satisfaction?

SAIR Conference
Orlando, Florida
September 25, 2012

Ross A. Griffith
Wake Forest University
griffith@wfu.edu
http://www.wfu.edu/ir/
• Founded in 1834
• Schools:
  • Arts and Sciences, Business, Divinity, Graduate, Law, and Medicine
• Total FTE enrollment – 7,071
  • Undergraduate – 4,621
• 6 year graduation rate – 90%
• Student/faculty ratio – 11/1
• SAT/ACT optional in 2009
Overview

- Seniors majoring in Mathematical Business collaborate with Office of Institutional Research for project in their capstone course
- Students in 2012 for project presented were Shannon McGorry, Will Correa and Ben Blais
- Regression Study on satisfaction items conducted on 2011 College Senior Survey (CSS)
- Significant Difference Study conducted on Males vs. Females, Greeks vs. Non-Greeks and Business vs. Non-Business majors on 2011 CSS
Background of College Senior Survey (CSS)

- Office of Institutional Research administers College Senior Survey (CSS) to graduating seniors every other odd year in the Spring
- Survey gauges graduating seniors’ opinions and satisfaction level with various university aspects
- A total of 239 graduating seniors in 2011 completed over 200 questions representing 25% of graduating class
Regression Study

• The most important dependent variable, “If you could make your college choice over, would you still choose to enroll at your current college?” was correlated with 21 satisfaction questions as independent variables.
• Students used unit record data in SPSS to conduct the study
• Provide recommendations for improvements based on senior survey analysis
Original Report

• Analyzed HEDS’ Senior Survey results from national private colleges and universities
• Featured quadrant graph to group independent variables impacting student satisfaction
• Attempts to answer same question as this report only at a national level
2009 Report

• Students produced replica of Wetzel’s report but for 2009 senior survey data
• Used two dependent variables: reenrollment and overall satisfaction with college experience
• Presented results, analysis, and recommendations based on 2009 survey
Variable Selection for 2011 Report

• Priority was for variables with largest impact on Wake Forest students’ satisfaction

• Use 2009 Report variables to compare to 2011 report and provide recommendation based on changes

• Chose additional demographic variables that would provide university important insight

• Most importantly, examine Top Priority variables from 2009 for improvement purposes
Results – Satisfaction by Motivational Importance

- **Top Priority**: those variables with low satisfaction yet high impact on decision to reenroll.
- **On Target**: those variables with both high satisfaction among students and high importance on decision to reenroll.
- **Low Priority**: those variables with low satisfaction and low impact on decision to reenroll.
- **Sleepers**: those variables with high satisfaction and low impact on decision to reenroll.
# Quadrant Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Priority</th>
<th>On Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Racial Diversity</td>
<td>Social Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Planning</td>
<td>Availability of Social Activities on Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>General Education Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising</td>
<td>Humanities Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality of Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class Size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sleepers</strong></td>
<td><strong>Low Priority</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Contact with Faculty</td>
<td>Financial Aid Package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Science Courses</td>
<td>Laboratory facilities and Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad Academic Experience</td>
<td>Job Placement Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Facilities</td>
<td>Computing Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring or other Academic</td>
<td>Student Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance</td>
<td>Science and Mathematics Courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Quadrant Analysis**

- **Top Priority**: Racial Diversity, Career Planning, Housing, Academic Advising
- **On Target**: Social Life, Availability of Social Activities on Campus, General Education Courses, Humanities Courses, Quality of Instruction, Class Size
- **Sleepers**: Amount of Contact with Faculty, Social Science Courses, Study Abroad Academic Experience, Library Facilities, Tutoring or other Academic Assistance
- **Low Priority**: Financial Aid Package, Laboratory facilities and Equipment, Job Placement Services, Computing Assistance, Student Health Services, Science and Mathematics Courses
Demographic Differences

• Students also studied three different “demographic groups”
  • Male vs. Female
  • Business vs. Non-Business
  • Greek vs. Non-Greek

• Tested differences between these groups for reenrollment probability and satisfaction with social life
Significant Differences

• Greeks were more likely to reenroll than non-Greeks (3.42 vs. 3.2)

• Females slightly higher than males to reenroll (3.37 vs. 3.19)

• Business students were no more likely to reenroll than non-business students.
Social Life Satisfaction

• Females have higher satisfaction than males (3.22 vs. 3.00)
• Greeks have higher satisfaction than non-Greeks (3.32 vs. 2.97)
• Difference between Greek female vs. non-Greek female is greater than the difference between Greek male vs. non-Greek male
  • This finding suggests that female’s social life is more greatly affected by their Greek affiliation
Males vs. Females

- **Males Significantly Higher:**
  - Challenged professor’s ideas
  - Self-rating:
    - Academic ability
    - Creativity
    - Leadership
    - Mathematical abilities
  - Career Concerns
    - High Income
    - Leadership potential
    - Own business

- **Females Significantly Higher:**
  - Involvement on campus:
    - Performing community service
    - Joining a fraternity/sorority
    - Voting in student elections
  - Less interaction with faculty members
  - Satisfaction with Overall college experience
  - Overall GPA
Greeks vs. Non-Greeks

Greeks Significantly Higher:
- White
- Drink alcohol
- Participate in clubs
- Perform volunteer work
- Vote in student elections
- Raise money for a cause
- Study abroad
- Career concerns:
  - High income
  - Social recognition

Non-Greeks Significantly Higher:
- Satisfaction with:
  - Library facilities
  - Tutoring
  - Career counseling
  - Housing
  - Job placement
  - Overall quality of instruction
Comparison to 2009 Survey

**Improvements:**
- Racial Diversity
- Availability of Social Activities on Campus
- Satisfaction with amount of contact with faculty
- Satisfaction with computing facilities

**Declines:**
- Satisfaction with student housing
- Satisfaction with financial aid package
Recommendations

- Focus on top priority variables
  - Racial diversity
  - Career planning
  - Housing
  - Academic advising

- Focus on Social Life for Non-Greeks particularly
“Would You Choose This Institution Again?”
What Drives Student Satisfaction?

SAIR Conference
Orlando, Florida
September 25, 2012

Ross A. Griffith
Wake Forest University
griffith@wfu.edu
http://www.wfu.edu/ir/