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2003-2004 Senior Survey

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Recommended Citation

Southwestern Oklahoma State University, "2003-2004 Senior Survey" (2004). *Assessment Center Reports*. 70.

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SOUTHWESTERN OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
SENIOR SURVEY
Weatherford Campus
2003-2004

Graduating seniors answer survey questionnaires, which are included in graduation application packets. Surveys are sent to the Assessment Center where they are processed and tabulated. For the 2003-2004 academic year, the return rate was almost 36 percent: 685 surveys were distributed; 244 were returned for processing.

The Senior Survey asks for students' perceptions of their acquired skills and knowledge. It also asks seniors to rate their levels of participation in campus activities as well as their use and ratings of University services. Responses to items are presented in either means or percentages. (The total number of responses to each question varies considerably.)

A slightly revised form was used beginning the 1999-2000 academic year. Some generalizations from the 2003-2004 data, as well as significant differences from previous years, include the following (response choices are in italics):

General

- ◆ Overall, the experiences at Southwestern met the needs of the survey respondents *well to very well* in intellectual and personal growth as well as preparation for further education and career. Their overall satisfaction with academic experiences and student services at Southwestern was *high to very high*. Eighty-seven percent would *probably* or *definitely* recommend Southwestern to someone who wanted to major in their field.

Skills and Knowledge

- ◆ The average respondent feels their Southwestern experiences prepared them *well to very well* in a wide variety of areas: communication, problem solving, research, mathematical concepts, coping with stress, critical thinking, leadership and organizational skills, using new technologies, etc. Using a scale of 1-4 (*very well to poorly*) the strongest six areas are using computers at work and for personal use (each with a mean of 1.73), working cooperatively (1.82), making informed decisions (1.83), self-reliance (1.83), and personal development (1.84). Only 11% of the respondents, or less, felt that they were *poorly* prepared in any area listed.
- ◆ Southwestern experiences helped the average respondent to understand *satisfactorily, well, or very well* the following areas: other cultures, technologies, wellness, sciences, social sciences, humanities, arts, gender issues, racial issues, morals and ethics, and government and politics or citizenship issues. All of these areas showed improvement over recent years.

Participation on Campus

- ◆ Attendance at Southwestern campus events was about the same as previous years.
- ◆ Overall, no significant changes were noted in the number of participants in Southwestern campus events. Participation in some of the events decreased this year when compared to the previous survey. Some events had increased in participation.

Student Services

- ◆ While ratings of student services have remained similar to recent years, there is a 9% increase in satisfaction in Financial Aid. In addition, the approval level has increased by 6% in several other areas: Housing Office, Academic Advisement, Public Safety, and Food Services. Only 9% of the respondents used a service and were less than satisfied.

Life Goals

- ◆ Ten listed goals are rated in order of importance by survey respondents. On a scale of 1-4 (*highly important* to *not important*) marrying the right person was still rated as the most important (with a mean of 1.16) followed by succeeding in work (1.24), having strong friendships (1.30), continuing to learn (1.42), raising a family (1.47), being independent (1.60), being a leader (2.00), working to correct social or economic injustices (2.16), and geographic mobility (2.31). Having lots of money continues to rank tenth (2.62).

Additional Information

- ◆ The major in which 62% of the respondents earned their degree was their first choice. Forty-eight percent never changed their major, and 43% changed their major only one or two times. This is similar to the data from recent years.
- ◆ Seventy-three percent indicated that classes were offered when needed. Eighty-one percent believed there were enough classes offered in their major, and 71% felt that the variety of classes offered in their major was sufficient.
- ◆ Seventy-five percent rated academic advisement as *good* to *excellent*. Eighty percent answered that they met with faculty members outside of class *occasionally* or *often*.
- ◆ This year's results reveal that 17% of the senior respondents worked *10 or fewer hours a week*, and 41% worked 21 or more hours a week. Fifteen percent were *not employed while taking classes*.
- ◆ After graduation, 52% plan to attend graduate school. Seventeen percent have no plans to continue their education.
- ◆ Twenty percent of the respondents have secured full-time employment that has either already begun to some degree or will begin after graduation. Twenty-six percent have begun looking for full time employment and 55% will begin looking within the next six months.