

2004 Student Affairs Survey Report

In April 2004, the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) administered the Student Affairs Survey (SAS). The SAS consists of 47 questions covering various aspects of University life. The SAS was completed by 906 students in selected classes from all UTA schools/colleges, representing 5% of the undergraduate student population in spring 2004.

The SAS contains a subset of questions from the Comprehensive Student Survey, an instrument that has been administered periodically since 1973. Due to concerns about length, the Comprehensive Student Survey was discontinued and two shorter surveys, the SAS and the Student Experience Survey (SES) were developed for the 2004 administration. IRP staff worked closely with administrators from the Student Affairs division to determine the content for the SAS, which included some substantive items from the Comprehensive Student Survey, some new items, and demographic items deemed useful in interpreting the results of the other questions.

Demographics of Survey Respondents

Demographic comparisons showed the survey respondents to be fairly representative of the undergraduate student population at UTA, with one notable exception. The respondents' distribution by classification was not representative of the overall student population in spring 2004, which was comprised of 37% freshmen and sophomores, 58% juniors and seniors, and 5% degreed undergraduates. In the respondent group, about 19% of the respondents were freshmen or sophomores, 75% were juniors or seniors, and 2% were degreed undergraduates. The remaining 3% were master's students. The under sampling of freshman occurred because the intent of the survey was to capture the responses of undergraduates who had been at UTA long enough to use some of the services provided by the Student Affairs Division.

The respondents were more similar to the overall undergraduate student population with regard to ethnicity, as shown below:

Ethnicity	SAS Respondents Spring 2004	UTA Students Spring 2004
Black	11.3	13.4
White	51.9	54.5
Hispanic	14.5	12.8
Native American	0.5	0.8
Asian	15.4	12.2
International/Other/Unknown	6.4	6.3

The respondent group was 48% male and 52% female, similar to the 47% male and 53% female distribution of UTA undergraduates. Most of the respondents were full-time students who attended day classes only (65.4%) or day and night classes (22.8%), a higher proportion of full-time students than in the overall undergraduate population (70%).

Highlights from the 2004 SAS are included below:

Student Characteristics and Behavior

- ✓ About two-thirds of the respondents were employed during the school year, with 12% working 40 or more hours per week. Twenty-three percent reported working 20 hours or fewer per week and 32% worked between 20 and 40 hours per week. Nearly 28% were not employed and 6% worked only semester/summer breaks.
- ✓ The largest percentage of students reported living outside Arlington, but within 25 miles of campus (35.1%). Twenty-one percent of the students report living outside Arlington, 25 miles or more from campus. Eleven percent of students live within one mile of campus and an additional 33.2% live within Arlington city limits. Fifteen percent of the students reported living on campus
- ✓ Fifty-one percent (51%) reported living in their own home off-campus and 31% reported living with parents or relatives. Six percent (6%) of the students reported living in residence halls and 7% reported living in a university apartment. A small percentage (1%) lived in a fraternity/sorority or university house and the remaining 4% lived off-campus in an apartment.
- ✓ The primary reason for choosing not to live in campus housing was the convenience of living at home (46%), followed by expense of living in campus housing (19.6%).
- ✓ Forty percent (40%) of the students spend 1-5 hours on campus per week outside the classroom. Fourteen percent (14%) of the students spend no time on campus outside the classroom, whereas 18% reported spending over 15 hours per week on campus, outside the classroom.
- ✓ Students reported their greatest personal satisfaction while at UTA came from making progress toward their career goal (48%), followed by intellectual development (22%) and peer group interactions (12%).
- ✓ Students' main source of information about campus activities or events is other students (28%), followed by signs, posters or bulletin boards (27%) and by reading the Shorthorn (23%).
- ✓ Nearly half (46.5%) of the students reported participating in University-sponsored activities (e.g., organization meetings, recreational sports, and athletic, social or cultural events) at least a few times a semester, but only 15% participate weekly. Nine percent said they participated two or three times a month. Twenty-three percent said they participated a few times during the semester and 53.5% stated they never or almost never participated in University-sponsored activities
- ✓ Forty-three percent (43%) of the students reported they would seek help from parents or relatives if they had a personal problem. Nearly 37% indicated they would seek help from other students or friends while 11% indicated they would seek help from a faculty member. The remaining 9% would seek help from other resources on campus (i.e., Student Affairs staff, student organization officers/peers, Health Center Psychologists, etc.)

- ✓ Seventy-six percent (76%) of the students felt there are places where they can go to express complaints and/or suggestions, although 57% of the students surveyed were unsure of where to go.

Usage/Awareness of Services

Usage of Student Affairs' services varied. Students rated 12 services according to frequency of use (i.e., two or more times per month, a few times during the semester, almost never, aware of but never use the service and not aware of service.)

There was a lack of awareness of several key services available to students on the part of the respondents. Fifty-three percent of all respondents were not aware there was an attorney for students, 40% were not aware of the Office of Multicultural Services, and 24% were not aware there was an Office for Students with Disabilities. Respondents were most familiar with student publications (Shorthorn, Renegade), with only 5% not aware of those publications.

Satisfaction

Students were generally satisfied with Student Affairs' services in 2004. Students rated 16 items on a scale of 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). Average ratings ranged from 3.05 to 3.75, all in the Neutral to Satisfied range. Of the questions related to satisfaction, results reported are based on students who actually use the services. Those who reported never using the service were eliminated from the analysis.

- Aspects with which students expressed the greatest satisfaction include:
 - ✓ Student Publications (N=846, 61% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)
 - ✓ Cultural Opportunities (N=895, 44% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)
 - ✓ Opportunities for Participating in Student Organizations/Activities (N=895, 48% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)
 - ✓ Social Opportunities (N=896, 48% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)
 - ✓ Campus Recreation (N=450, 39% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)
- Aspects with which students expressed the least satisfaction include:
 - ✓ Attorney for the Students (N=67, 8% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)
 - ✓ Student Congress (N=106, 14% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)
 - ✓ Dean of Students Office (N=107, 13% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)
 - ✓ Office of Multicultural Services (N=96, 12% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)
 - ✓ UTA Hosts! (N=283, 14% Satisfied/Very Satisfied)

UTA Experiences

Students' experiences with Student Affairs' services varied. Students were asked to provide responses to a series of statements concerning various experiences on the UTA campus using an Agreement scale: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=agree; 4=strongly agree; 5=no opinion or not applicable. Responses of "no opinion" were not included in the calculation of mean responses. Students were generally in agreement with the statements (i.e., Mean \geq 3.0) with eight aspects of university life pertaining to Student Affairs.

- ✓ Seventy-seven percent (77%) of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their experiences at UTA have given them a greater appreciation for other cultures and differences among people.
- ✓ Sixty percent (60%) of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that their experiences at UTA have motivated them to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- ✓ Fifty-nine percent (59%) of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that Student Affairs staff members assist students in a helpful, understandable, and considerate manner.
- ✓ Less than half of the respondents (49%) either agreed or strongly agreed that there is a sense of community within the university.
- ✓ Three-fourths of the respondents have found useful information available on one or more of UTA's Student Affairs websites.
- ✓ Half of the respondents felt they have been referred to several different people before someone could answer their questions.
- ✓ Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the respondents were familiar with the University's grievance/complaint procedures and about 31% knew where they could obtain the information if needed.

Group Comparisons

Undergraduates vs. Graduate Students

- ✓ Graduate students were most often enrolled full-time evening or part time evening (59%) while undergraduate students were most often enrolled full-time days (67%).
- ✓ While both graduates (62%) and undergraduates (50%) tended to live off-campus in their own house, due to our large commuter populations (87% of respondents reported commuting to campus), undergraduates were more likely to live at home with parents or relatives (31% for undergraduates compared to only 10% for graduate students).
- ✓ Forty-two percent of undergraduates agreed or strongly agreed there was a sense of community while only 28% of graduate students felt a sense of community.
- ✓ A larger percentage of undergraduate students were unaware of the Office of Attorney for Students (53%) than were graduate students (41%).
- ✓ More undergraduate students read the Shorthorn and/or Renegade a few times to two or more times a month (57%) than did graduate students (35%).

Students residing on-campus vs. students residing off-campus

- ✓ Students residing on-campus (43%) were more aware of UTA Health Services and more likely than off-campus students to use those services a few times to two or more times a month (22%).
- ✓ Students residing on-campus (30%) were more aware of student activities (E.X.C.E.L, Greek Life, Leadership) and more likely than off-campus students to use those services a few times to two or more times a month (13%).
- ✓ Students residing on-campus were more aware of extracurricular activities (39% vs. 16%), and campus recreation (50% vs. 24%) and more likely than off-campus students to use those services a few times to two or more times a month.

- ✓ On-campus students are four times more likely to spend over 15 hours per week on campus, outside of the classroom, than are off-campus students (48% vs. 12%).
- ✓ Nearly half of off-campus students (49%) stated they received their greatest personal satisfaction while attending UTA from making progress towards career goals, followed by Intellectual development (23%).
- ✓ One-third (32%) of on-campus students stated they had received their greatest personal satisfaction while attending UTA from making progress towards career goals, followed by participation in extracurricular activities (16%).

Comparisons by ethnicity: White, minority students, and Asian Students

- ✓ When queried about the main source of financial support while attending UTA 43% of Asian students stated, "parents or other family members". This compares to 29% for White students and 23% for minority students.
- ✓ When asked about the highest degree one planned to obtain at UTA 72% of Whites, 62% of minority, and 66% of Asian students said, " Bachelor's degree." Thirty-one percent of minority students, 23% of Asian students, and 20% of White students stated their intended educational goal is to obtain a Master's degree from UTA.
- ✓ Seven percent of Asian Students, 3% of minority students, and 2% of the White students who participated in this interview are currently classified as graduate students.
- ✓ Fifty-percent of Asian students, 41% of minority students, and 39% of White students said they felt there is a sense of community within the university.