2012 Priorities for Online Learners Survey

Executive Summary

During fall 2012, 172 DSU students (54 graduates, 115 undergraduates/other, and 3 students did not indicated class level) completed the web-based Priorities for Online Learners Survey produced by Noel-Levitz, Inc. This is 36% response rate (477 students were asked to complete the survey.).This measures students' satisfaction with a wide range of college experiences, programs, and services. This survey provides information on how satisfied students are with DSU and what is most important to them. DSU's ratings are compared to over 66,000 students.

This survey was administered to all degree-seeking undergraduate and graduate students who are taking 100% of their courses online. This report includes data from three groups: (1) all DSU students (all degree-seeking undergraduate and graduate students taking 100% of their courses online and completed the survey) (2) graduate students (degree-seeking graduate student taking 100% of their courses online and completed the survey) and (3) undergraduate students (degree-seeking undergraduate and 'other' student taking 100% of their courses online and completed the survey). The undergraduate population includes the first-year, second year, third year, fourth year, special students, and students who selected "other class level".

DSU students gave very high satisfaction ratings to WebAdvisor's capabilities, the payment process, and computing services. The top ranked items based on average satisfaction are:

DSU Students (item 5 and 6 are tied for average satisfaction):
1. I am able to use WebAdvisor to access critical student information.
2. Billing and payment procedures are convenient for me.
3. My questions on how to use D2L were answered in a timely manner by the DSU staff.
4. Computing and networking services are adequate to support my class work.
5. Registration for online courses is convenient.
6. This institution has a good reputation.

Graduate Students:
1. Billing and payment procedures are convenient for me.
2. Registration for online courses is convenient.
3. The institution responds quickly when I request information.
4. I received adequate information to guide me through the registration process.
5. I am able to use WebAdvisor to access critical student information.

Undergraduate Students:
1. I am able to use WebAdvisor to access critical student information.
2. My questions on how to use D2L were answered in a timely manner by the DSU staff.
3. This institution has a good reputation.
4. Computing and networking services are adequate to support my class work.
5. Billing and payment procedures are convenient.

Students also rated the importance of various factors in their decision to enroll at DSU. The majority of the students indicated that "Convenience", "Work schedule", and "Flexible pacing for completing a program" were most important in their decision to enroll at DSU.

The Priorities for Online Learners Survey allows students to rate both the importance of specific items and their satisfaction with those items. A performance gap is then calculated by taking the difference in the importance rating and the satisfaction rating. A large performance gap score for an item (e.g., 1.5) indicates that the institution is not meeting students' expectations. A small or zero performance gap score (e.g.,<=0.50) indicates that an institution is meeting students' expectations, and a negative gap score indicates that an institution is exceeding students' expectations.

Top 5 Areas of Strength: High Importance and High Satisfaction (Low performance gaps)

The following areas had an average importance rating of greater than six (on a scale of one to seven). Satisfaction with these areas was also high with an average satisfaction rating of greater than or equal to 5.75. The performance gap was less than or equal to 0.5. There may be more items that qualify as an "areas of strength", but the top five with the highest satisfaction were only included in the lists below.

Listed in order of performance gap:
- DSU Students
  - I am able to use WebAdvisor to access critical student information. (performance gap: 0.30)
    - Ranked 1st in satisfaction and ranked 6th in importance
  - Billing and payment procedures are convenient. (performance gap: 0.26)
    - Ranked 2nd in satisfaction and ranked 14th in importance
  - My questions on how to use D2L were answered in a timely manner by the DSU staff. (performance gap: 0.06)
    - Ranked 3rd in satisfaction and ranked 25th in importance
  - Computing & networking services are adequate to support my class work. (performance gap: 0.33)
    - Ranked 4th in satisfaction and tied for 16th in importance
  - This institution has a good reputation. (performance gap: 0.17)
    - Tied for 5th in satisfaction and ranked 23rd in importance
- Graduate Students
  - Billing and payment procedures are convenient. (performance gap: -0.05)
    - Ranked 1st in satisfaction and ranked 13th in importance
  - Registration for online courses is convenient. (performance gap: 0.22)
    - Ranked 2nd in satisfaction and tied for 4th in importance
  - This institution responds quickly when I request information. (performance gap: 0.01)
    - Ranked 3rd in satisfaction and ranked 14th in importance
  - I received adequate information to guide me through the registration process. (performance gap: 0.11)
    - Ranked 4th in satisfaction and ranked 23rd in importance
  - I am able to use WebAdvisor to access critical student information. (performance gap: 0.33)
    - Ranked 5th in satisfaction and ranked 8th in importance
- Undergraduate Students
  - I am able to use WebAdvisor to access critical student information. (performance gap: 0.30)
    - Ranked 1st in satisfaction and ranked 5th in importance
  - My questions on how to use D2L were answered in a timely manner by the DSU staff. (performance gap: 0.15)
    - Tied for 2nd in satisfaction and ranked 23rd in importance

- This institution has a good reputation. (performance gap: 0.03)
  - Tied for 2nd in satisfaction and ranked 28th in importance
- Computing & networking services are adequate to support my class work. (performance gap: 0.31)
  - Ranked 4th in satisfaction and ranked 18th in importance
- Billing and payment procedures are convenient. (performance gap: 0.40)
  - Ranked 5th in satisfaction and tied for 16th in importance

Areas of Concern: High Importance and Lower Satisfaction (high performance gaps)

The following areas were rated high in importance (average importance rating of greater than six – on a scale of one to seven) and lower in satisfaction with a performance gap that was greater than 0.75. In addition, DSU's average satisfaction ratings on all of the items below are lower than the national norms. There may be more items that qualify as an "areas of concern", but the top five with the largest performance gap were only included in the lists below.

Listed in order of performance gap:
- DSU Students
  - The quality of online instruction is excellent. (performance gap: 1.11)
    - Ranked 26th in satisfaction and ranked 1st in importance
  - Instructors respond to emails within 24 hours. (performance gap: 0.95)
    - Ranked 27th in satisfaction and ranked 7th in importance
  - Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress. (performance gap: 0.94)
    - Ranked 31st in satisfaction and ranked 15th in importance
  - Feedback is provided on assignments, tests, and projects within the timeframe specified by the instructor. (performance gap: 0.94)
    - Ranked 28th in satisfaction and tied for 9th in importance
  - Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment. (performance gap: 0.88)
    - Ranked 22nd in satisfaction and tied for 3rd in importance
- Graduate Students
  - The quality of online instruction is excellent. (performance gap: 0.94)
    - Ranked 19th in satisfaction and ranked 1st in importance
  - Instructors respond to emails within 24 hours. (performance gap: 0.90)
    - Ranked 28th in satisfaction and tied for 15th in importance
  - Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress. (performance gap: 0.87)
    - Ranked 29th in satisfaction and ranked 20th in importance
  - Instructors communicate with the students about how long it takes to return graded, assignments, tests and projects. (performance gap: 0.86)
    - Ranked 30th in satisfaction and tied for 21st in importance
  - Feedback is provided on assignments, tests, and projects within the timeframe specified by the instructor. (performance gap: 0.83)
    - Ranked 26th in satisfaction and tied for 15th in importance
- Undergraduate Students
  - The quality of online instruction is excellent. (performance gap: 1.18)
    - Ranked 31st in satisfaction and ranked 1st in importance
  - Feedback is provided on assignments, tests, and projects within the timeframe specified by the instructor. (performance gap: 0.99)
    - Ranked 28th in satisfaction and tied for 6th in importance
  - Instructors respond to emails within 24 hours. (performance gap: 0.99)
    - Ranked 24th in satisfaction and tied for 2nd in importance
  - Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress. (performance gap: 0.96)

- - - Tied for 32nd in satisfaction and tied for 14th in importance
  - Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment. (performance gap: 0.96)
    - - Ranked 27th in satisfaction and ranked 8th in importance