Fall 2013 EBI Campus Climate Survey Report

Eastern Michigan University participated in Educational Benchmarking Inc.’s (EBI) Student Campus Climate Survey for the first time in Fall 2013. The survey was sent to a random sample of 3,500 students (3,000 undergraduate, 500 graduate). The results were received in June 2014 and the comparative results were received in August 2014. In total, 426 students responded, a 12.2% response rate. Some key demographic information about the respondents includes:

- 284 (67%) of respondents were female; 137 (32.3%) male
- 327 (72.2%) identified as White; 85 (18.8%) identified as Black/African-American
- 240 (56.3%) of respondents were traditional college age (18-24)
- 363 (85.8%) identified as heterosexual
- 137 (32.3%) were seniors; 97 (21.7%) junior; 85 (20%) Master’s students; 57 (13.4%) sophomore; 35 (8.3%) freshmen and first year students
- 379 (89.4%) cannot afford to attend EMU without loans, scholarships or a paying job
- 295 (69%) said their parents attended college
- 229 (53%) reported their parents graduated
- 222 (52.4%) reported having a cumulative GPA of 3.5-4.0
- Only 18 (4.2%) have less than a 2.50 cumulative GPA

The 6 peer institutions referenced in the comparative data are:

- California State University - East Bay (Carnegie Class)
- Florida State University
- Middle Tennessee State University - 2013
- University of Memphis - 2012
- University of Northern Iowa (Carnegie Class)
- University of South Alabama

Please note that these six peer institutions were chosen from those institutions that participated in the survey by the Office of Diversity and Community Involvement, headed by Director Reginald Barnes.

**Analysis Methodology:** EBI highlighted six factors in the survey that greatly impact students’ overall satisfaction at EMU. Impact is determined by the regression value, measuring the percentage that a factor accounts for the variation of scoring in overall satisfaction. The means are calculated from responses with assigned values from 1 (lowest performance) to 7 (highest performance).

EBI rates performance factors with a mean score greater than 4.5 as EXCELLENT and those greater than 4.0 as GOOD. Based on this scale, EMU’s overall performance was rated as EXCELLENT at 5.33. The following table lists the top six factors identified by the survey that predict and impact student satisfaction.
Table 1: Top Six Predictors and Impact on Overall Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating of Overall Satisfaction</th>
<th>Impact on Overall Satisfaction</th>
<th>EMU (Means)</th>
<th>Select 6 (Means)</th>
<th>Carnegie Class (Means)</th>
<th>All Institutions (Means)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retention and Graduation (Top predictor)</td>
<td>14 %</td>
<td>6.39</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>6.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse Experiences and Social Justice (Second predictor)</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Treatment (Third predictor)</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>5.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Curricular Environment (Fourth predictor)</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>5.78</td>
<td>5.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Programs and Policies: Special Consideration for Minorities (Fifth predictor)</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Relationships (Sixth predictor)</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>5.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EMU was rated as EXCELLENT on overall satisfaction and all six predictive factors.

1. EBI identified Retention and Graduation as our TOP PREDICTOR with a rating of 6.39 vs. 6.49 for All Institutions. These results indicate a greater intention by the respondents to stay and complete their degrees at EMU.

2. Our SECOND PREDICTOR was Diverse Experiences and Social Justice (5.43 vs. 5.50). Respondents acknowledged that EMU has exposed them to a diverse student population, reporting that our diversity improved their educational experience, enabled them to interact with students who are different from them and helped them develop a sense of justice, fairness and advocacy for others.

3. According to our THIRD PREDICTOR: Equal Treatment, respondents reported that overall, students are treated equally on this campus regardless of their social identity (5.43 vs. 5.48).

4. Peer Relationships was identified as our SIXTH PREDICTOR of student satisfaction. Many respondents reported that they feel accepted by peers and have made friends while they have been at EMU (EMU 5.28 vs. All Institutions 5.38).

Although EMU was rated lower on overall satisfaction and across all factors than our comparative groups, only two of those differences were statistically significant. The first was Overall Satisfaction (5.33 vs. 5.62) and Co-Curricular Environment (4.99 vs. 5.77). Next steps regarding those two results will be discussed later in this report.
Initial Observation (Overall Satisfaction):

In order to rate Overall Satisfaction, students were asked to indicate their level of agreement to five specific statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Satisfaction Questions</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>All Inst. Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. An environment that includes people different from me improves my quality of education.</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>5.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. This college/university provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas, opinions and beliefs.</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>5.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Overall, I am satisfied with my experience at this institution.</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>5.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I would recommend this college/university to siblings or friends as a good place to go to college.</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>5.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel as though I belong to this campus community.</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>5.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EMU was rated as EXCELLENT on all five Overall Satisfaction questions. Although EMU was rated lower on all five satisfaction questions vs. our comparative groups, only three of those differences (items 3, 4, and 5 above) were statistically significant. Items 3 and 4 are similar measures of the Overall Satisfaction of the students, while item 5 attempts to measure inclusiveness of the campus community.

For item 5, the following populations rated EMU the lowest:

- Students with a diagnosed chronic illness or medical disability (8) at 3.50;
- Students between the ages of 25-29 (59) at 4.17;
- Students who identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native/First Nation (15) at 4.20; and
- Students with a diagnosed hearing impairment (7) at 4.29.

Additional Key Observation:

An additional key observation concerns student attitudes about campus safety. Specifically “Students do not feel safe walking across campus.” (4.38 vs. 5.92). But it should be noted that the survey was deployed three weeks after the tragic death of an EMU student last fall.

Area for Improvement:

As reported previously, the factors in which we differed most from the comparative group are the “Co-Curricular Environment” (4.99 vs. 5.77), and the statement, “I feel as though I belong to this campus community” (4.82 vs. 5.36). In response to these results, a committee of leaders from across campus will be established to further assess the raw data, emphasizing those related to the two factors above. Subsequently, recommendations from that
committee for corrective action will be forwarded to the Office of the Provost for consideration. (Responsibility: Calvin Phillips, AVP of Student Affairs. Due date: January 2015).

**Conclusion:**

Although our response sample was limited, this survey provided a wealth of information about various aspects of campus climate at EMU. Since this was our first administration of the survey, the scores for factors and individual items should be used as a baseline against which targets can be set and strategies for improvement can be developed, implemented and measured over time. Additionally, revision of the survey to include campus-developed questions as well as other modifications will be assessed. (Responsibility: Calvin Phillips, AVP of Student Affairs. Due date: January 2015).