

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

GRADUATING SENIOR ASSESSMENT 2007 REPORT

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INTRODUCTION TO STUDY AND REPORT

The following Executive Summary briefly reports on research undertaken to assess the experience of Eastern Michigan University undergraduate students who graduated in April 2007. A mixed-method approach was used, relying on both qualitative and quantitative data to inform the analysis.

In addition to the dissemination of this report, those departments and Schools for which at least 10 of their students completed the survey have been provided with frequency distribution tables based on the survey data specific to their unit. Deans and Department Heads have also been provided with a copy of an SPSS data file that contains data specific to only their unit, from which student identification numbers have been deleted. Using these tables and data, individual units can compare the report of their students against that of the aggregate.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A set of 25 face-to-face interviews was conducted by the Principle Investigator prior to completing survey construction so that the qualitative analysis could inform this process. The interviews were also coded into thematic categories, and the findings have been used to support the recommendations that follow.

Interview participants were drawn from a random sample of undergraduate students who had applied for Winter 2007 graduation. Participants were recruited via an invitation message sent to their emich email accounts. Each of the five Colleges was equally represented in the interviewee pool; 14 of the interviewees were female

and 11 were male. Unfortunately, with one exception, only Caucasian students volunteered for an interview, as did only US-resident students.

It is very important to point out that the qualitative data reported here is different in nature and intended for a different purpose than the survey data. At most, the qualitative findings within this report are intended to be used for contextual grounding of the survey findings, to be informative in future survey construction, and to be read as suggestive of hypotheses yet to be tested empirically, rather than as evidence-based conclusions. Given the relatively small number of interviews conducted vis-à-vis the size of the population of graduating seniors, as well as the homogeneity of the demographic characteristics of the interviewees, the qualitative findings should not be extended beyond their appropriate application.

The resultant online survey consisted of the following subcategories: level of usage of facilities and services; satisfaction with facilities and services; frequency of engagement in extra-curricular activities; satisfaction with courses within major, general education courses, and technology-based course delivery systems; academic history; family and living arrangements; employment while in school; plans after graduation; sense of well-being; opinions regarding the quality of education and reputation of EMU; and a set of demographic questions.

The online survey was delivered on April 17th, 2007 to the email addresses of all 1,571 undergraduate students who had applied for Winter 2007 graduation. A follow-up reminder email was sent one week later, with a final reminder sent the following week. No incentive was offered. Data collection ended on May 5th. The resultant response rate for the aggregate was 39%.

The response rate within each College arrayed as follows: College of Arts & Sciences, 45% (meaning that 263 of the 587 students who had applied for Winter 2007 graduation completed the survey); College of Business, 39% (80/205); College of Education, 57% (131/231); College of Health and Human Services, 45% (72/161); College of Technology, 42% (47/112).

Based on these data, we can determine that College representation in the aggregate was as follows, ordered from highest to lowest: Arts and Sciences (42.9%); College of education (21.4%); College of Business (13%); College of Health and Human Services (11.7%); College of Technology (7.7%); Other (3.3%, no response or General Studies).

SURVEY FINDINGS

This Executive Summary has been designed to bring the reader's attention to the survey findings and the recommendations the data lead the Principle Investigator to devise. The Summary should be useful in directing the reader to the sections most immediately pertinent to their area of responsibility. For expediency, the findings have been bulleted. Discussion of the findings, their implications, and their relationship to other findings can be found in the full report. The recommendations have been reported here in their entirety.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Demographics

- Sample characteristics closely mirror those of the population of Winter 2007 graduating seniors so the ability to generalize is considered fairly high.

Family and Living Arrangements

- For more than half of their time as a student, 66.5% commuted to campus.
- Of those who commuted, 43% commuted between 21 and 40 minutes, 16.5% commuted between 41 and 60 minutes, and 2.7% commuted for more than one hour.

- 19.3% were responsible for care of a child at least part of the time and 10.5% had responsibility for a person over the age of 18.

Financing Education

- Student loans were the most important source of financing, followed by parental support, personal employment, and scholarships and grants.
- Only 12.4% had no student loan debt.
- 38% had between \$5,000 and \$20,000 of student loan debt.
- 38.5% had between \$20,000 and \$45,000 of student loan debt.
- 8.4% reported student loan debt greater than \$45,000.
- Only 8.9% reported having not been employed while a student.
- 30.9% reported being employed for 20 hours or less per week.
- 50% reported being employed between 20 and 40 hours per week.
- 10.1% reported being employed for more than 40 hours per week.
- Only 27.4% reported being employed in a field related to their major.

Academic History

- 81.6% anticipated a graduating GPA of at least 3.0. Of those, 48.5% anticipated a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Only 18.4% anticipated a GPA lower than 3.0.
- 76% attended on a mostly full-time basis, 14.4% attended both full- and part-time, and only 9.6% attended mostly part-time.
- 43.9% needed between five and six years to complete their degree.
- Only 30.3% were able to complete in four years or less.
- 25.7% needed more than seven years to complete their degree.
- 45.2% did not have any transfer credit.
- 31.5% had transfer credit from a community college, 14.5% had credit from a four-year university, and 8.8% had transfer credit from both.
- 58.1% reported that EMU had been their first-choice school.
- 20.6% reported that they had not been able to afford their first choice school.
- 18.6% reported that their need to stay in the geographic region prevented them from attending their first-choice school.
- 7.2% had not been accepted elsewhere.

Plans after Graduation

- Only 48.2% had secured employment after graduation.
- Of those who had employment after graduation, only 31.1% had employment closely related to their major.
- 44.9% reported that they would be looking for employment after graduation.
- Only 10% reported they did not plan to pursue further education.
- 78.8% planned to pursue a Master's degree; 8.3% planned to pursue a second Bachelor's degree; and 10.6% planned to pursue a certificate or professional license.
- 86.7% reported either a high or very high likelihood that they would remain in Michigan after graduation.
- 67.8% reported a high or very high likelihood that they would remain in southeast Michigan.

FACILITIES AND SERVICES USAGE

Levels of usage of various facilities and services were measured on a scale of zero to four, with zero indicating no level of usage and four indicating a very high level of usage. The full report contains a report of the mean along with percentages of those reporting either no usage (“None” column), a low or moderate level of usage (“Lower Usage” column), or a high or very high level of usage (“Higher Usage” column).

The report on the various facilities and services is not intended to be read as comparative given that the services and facilities do not have equivalent functions or serve equivalent populations. In other words, the fact that 86.1% of the sample never used Snow Health Center for mental health counseling should not be compared against the fact that only 33.7% of the sample reported never using the REC-IM facilities. An appropriate use of the data would be to track usage of specific, individual services or facilities over-time. The full report provides a detailed representation of usage. For each of the services and facilities listed below, the *percentage of those reporting either high or very high usage* has been listed.

- Computer Labs: 67.3%
- Halle Library: 60.9%
- REC-IM Facilities: 26.9%
- McKenny Union: 41.4%
- New EMU Student Center: 25.1%
- Academic advising within Department: 31.4%
- Academic advising through College: 18.8%
- Academic advising through Pierce: 7.6%
- Financial Aid Office: 23.4%
- Career Services Office: 8.1%
- Snow Health Center for physical health care: 7.8%
- Snow Health Center for mental health care: 2.7%
- Holman Learning Center: 5%
- The Writing Center: 2.8%

SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Levels of satisfaction with facilities and services were measured on a scale of zero to four, along with a “never used” category. The full report contains a report of the mean along with percentages of those reporting either no satisfaction (“None” column), a low or moderate level of satisfaction (“Lower Satisfaction” column), or a high or very high level of satisfaction (“Higher Satisfaction” column). Levels of satisfaction have been reported below by *percentage of those reporting either a high or very high level of satisfaction.*

- Academic advising through College: 58.9%
- Academic advising through Pierce: 25.3%
- Graduation audit processing time: 54.6%
- Graduation audit information: 55.4%
- Clarity of degree requirements: 61%
- Financial Aid Office services: 49.3%
- Career Services information: 41.6%
- Career Services career counseling: 32.4%
- Snow Health Center (physical health): 55.8%
- Snow Health Center (mental health): 35.6%
- REC-IM equipment: 57.5%
- REC-IM hours: 53.6%
- Holman Learning Center services: 39.8%
- Writing Center services: 38.8%
- Halle Library services: 87.3%
- Halle Library holdings: 83.6%
- Computer technical support: 70%
- Computer availability: 61.8%
- Parking availability: 14.6%
- EMU Student Center: 69.9%
- Physical appearance (classrooms): 30.1%
- Physical appearance (grounds): 63%

FREQUENCY OF ENGAGEMENT IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Frequency of engagement in extra-curricular activities was measured on a scale of zero to four, with zero indicating no usage and four indicating a very high level of usage. The full report contains a report of the mean along with percentages of those reporting either no usage (“None” column), a low or moderate level of usage (“Lower Usage” column), or a high or very high level of usage (“Higher Usage” column).

Frequency of engagement has been reported as the *percentage of those reporting either a high or very high level of engagement*.

- Student organization activities: 18.6%
- Student government activities: 4.4%
- Departmental activities: 21.8%
- Varsity athletic competitions: 12.2%
- Intramural sports: 8.9%
- Classroom service learning projects: 10.2%
- Volunteering through campus organizations: 16.2%
- Volunteering through off-campus organizations: 15.7%
- Performances (music, theatre, dance, etc.): 11.1%
- Greek membership: 10.5%

SATISFACTION WITH COURSES WITHIN MAJOR

Levels of satisfaction with courses within the major were measured on a scale of zero to four, with zero indicating absolutely no satisfaction and four indicating a very high level of satisfaction. The full report contains a report of the mean along with percentages of those reporting either no satisfaction (“None” column), a low or moderate level of satisfaction (“Lower Satisfaction” column), or a high or very high level of satisfaction (“Higher Satisfaction” column). The *percentages of those reporting a high or very high level of satisfaction* with courses within the major have been listed below.

- Availability of required courses: 60.8%
- Availability of elective courses: 61.5%
- Quality of instruction: 75.8%
- Length of time to receive feedback: 72.6%
- Quality of feedback: 72.6%
- Opportunities to interact with faculty in class: 83.2%
- Opportunities to interact with faculty outside class: 62.6%
- Process for evaluating faculty: 51.8%
- Academic advising from faculty: 63%
- Level of respect from faculty: 79.1%
- Level of respect from front office staff: 69.1%
- Learning environment in classroom: 75.4%

SATISFACTION WITH GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES

Levels of satisfaction with General Education courses were measured on a scale of zero to four, with zero indicating absolutely no satisfaction and four indicating a very high level of satisfaction. The full report contains a report of the mean along with percentages of those reporting either no satisfaction (“None” column), a low or moderate level of satisfaction (“Lower Satisfaction” column), or a high or very high level of satisfaction (“Higher Satisfaction” column). The *percentages of those reporting a high or very high level of satisfaction* (“Higher Satisfaction” column) with General Education courses have been listed below.

- Availability of General Education courses: 81.8%
- Quality of instruction: 61.4%
- Length of time to receive feedback: 66.7%
- Quality of feedback: 64%
- Level of respected from faculty: 70.8%
- Learning environment in classroom: 64.2%

SATISFACTION WITH TECHNOLOGY-BASED COURSE DELIVERY

Levels of satisfaction with technology-based courses were measured on a scale of zero to four, with zero indicating absolutely no satisfaction and four indicating a very high level of satisfaction. For these measures, a “never used” column was available to indicate no experience with particular technologies. The full report contains a report of the mean along with percentages of those reporting either no satisfaction (“None” column), a low or moderate level of satisfaction (“Lower Satisfaction” column), or a high or very high level of satisfaction (“Higher Satisfaction” column). The *percentages of those reporting a high or very high level of satisfaction* (“Higher Satisfaction” column) with technology-based courses have been listed below.

- WebCT: 68.4%
- Web Caucus: 60.8%
- Electronic reserves: 78.7%
- Power Point Lectures: 76.8%
- Online course instruction: 76.1%
- My.emich course homepages: 73.6%

WELL-BEING AS EMU STUDENT

Well-being as an EMU student was measured on a scale of zero to four, in response to a series of statements with which the respondents were asked to report their level of agreement. The full report contains a report of the mean along with percentages of those reporting either no agreement (“None” column), a low or moderate level of agreement (“Lower Agreement” column), or a high or very high level of agreement (“Higher Agreement” column). Percentages of those reporting either a *high or very high level of agreement* with the statement have been reported below.

- “I had good relationships with fellow students”: 85.9%
- “I had good relationships with faculty”: 84.5%

- “I had positive interactions with office staff”: 66.6%
- “I have a sense of belonging at EMU”: 58.1%
- “I felt the faculty really cared about me”: 68%
- “I felt the administration really cared about me”: 32.3%
- “While on campus, I felt safe from physical assault”: 54.1%
- “While on campus, I felt safe from personal theft”: 44.4%
- “While in class, I felt safe from relational aggression”: 83.8%
- “Stress has negatively affected my performance”: 42.4%
- “Depression has negatively affected my performance”: 21.1%
- “Anxiety has negatively affected my performance”: 26.4%
- “Physical health problems have negatively affected my performance”: 19.3%

OPINIONS REGARDING QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND REPUTATION OF EMU

Opinions regarding the quality of education and reputation of EMU were measured on a scale of zero to four, in response to a series of statements with which the respondents were asked to report their level of agreement. The full report contains a report of the mean along with percentages of those reporting either no agreement (“None” column), a low or moderate level of agreement (“Lower Agreement” column), or a high or very high level of agreement (“Higher Agreement” column). Percentages of those reporting either a *high or very high level of agreement* with the statement have been reported below.

- “I received a high quality education from EMU”: 76.8%
- “The quality of education from EMU is comparable to other universities its size”: 71.9%
- “EMU prepared me well for my future career”: 69.7%
- “Employers will have a great deal of respect for my EMU degree”: 59.6%
- “EMU has a good reputation within the general public”: 47.8%
- “I am proud to be associate with EMU”: 64%
- “Overall, EMU is well managed”: 38.7%
- “EMU is managed as well as other universities its size”: 47.4%
- “I would recommend EMU to others”: 57.9%
- “If I had it to do over again, I would attend EMU”: 55.2%

PREDICATORS OF WILLINGNESS TO RECOMMEND EMU

To examine predictors of willingness to recommend EMU to others, correlation matrices were constructed to analyze its relationship to the following sets of measures: satisfaction with facilities and services; satisfaction with courses within major; satisfaction with general education courses; satisfaction with technology-based course delivery; sense of well-being; opinions regarding quality of education and reputation of EMU.

None of the measures of satisfaction with facilities and services had more than a weak relationship to willingness to recommend EMU to others. Of these, the five strongest relationships to willingness to recommend EMU to others were as follows: the physical appearance of the classroom buildings (.390); the physical appearance of the grounds (.348); financial aid services (.335); parking availability (.303); and clarity of degree requirements (.301). The direction of each of these relationships was positive, meaning that the higher the satisfaction on each of these measures, the higher the willingness to recommend EMU to others, or conversely, the lower the value, the lower the willingness to recommend EMU.

None of the measures of satisfaction with courses within the major had more than a weak relationship to willingness to recommend EMU to others, with one exception. Satisfaction with the learning environment in the classroom had a moderate, positive relationship (.469).

The same circumstance was found to be true regarding general education courses. Only satisfaction with the learning environment in the classroom had more

than a weak relationship to willingness to recommend EMU to others, which was moderate (.442).

None of the measures of satisfaction with technology-based course delivery proved to have more than a weak relationship to willingness to recommend EMU to others.

None of the measures of well-being proved to have a strong relationship to willingness to recommend EMU to others. Five of the measures, however, were moderately associated, listed in order of strength of the relationship: “I have a sense of belonging at EMU” (.602); “I felt the administration really cared about me” (.531); “I felt the faculty really cared about me” (.498); “I had positive interactions with office staff” (.491); and “While on campus, I felt safe from personal theft” (.402).

Measures of opinions regarding the quality of education and EMU’s reputation had more important relationships to willingness to recommend EMU to others than any of the other sets of measures. Five of the measures had moderate (although fairly high), positive relationships. Four had strong relationships to willingness to recommend. The strongest relationships were as follows: “If I had it to do over again, I would attend EMU (.823); “I am proud to be associated with EMU” (.820); “Overall, EMU is well managed” (.736); and “EMU is managed as well as other universities its size” (.736).

To test these relationships, a multiple-regression model was constructed, using “willingness to recommend EMU to others” as the dependent variable. Measures of satisfaction with at least a moderate correlation with this measure (.4 or above) were

incorporated as independent variables. Age and gender (as dummied variables) functioned as demographic variables within the model.

The resultant model had an R value of .908. Neither age nor gender was a predictor of willingness to recommend EMU to others. The strongest predictor (based on the size of the B value) was “If I had to do it over again, I would choose to attend EMU” (.345), followed closely by “I am proud to be associated with EMU” (.3.25).

Only three other variables were statistically significant predictors of willingness to recommend, as follows: “I think that EMU is managed as well as most universities its size” (.238); “I received a high quality education from EMU” (.137); and “While on campus, I felt safe from personal theft” (.049).

When the same model was tested with “I am proud to be associated with EMU” as the dependent variable, the following results emerged that strongly support the qualitative interviews. The R value for this model was .863.

The leading predictors of being proud to be associated with EMU were “I believe that EMU has a good reputation within the general public” (.186); “I have a sense of belonging to EMU” (.179); “I received a high quality education from EMU” (.163); “If I had to do it over again, I would choose to attend EMU” (.161); “Overall, I think that EMU is well managed” (.140); “I believe that employers will have a great deal of respect for my degree from Eastern” (.123); and “I believe that the quality of education I received from EMU is comparable to that from other universities” (.094).

Clearly, reputation of EMU was important for these respondents. Management of the institution and quality of education were two key reputation-related components that emerged through both the survey and the qualitative data. Given that these were key

predictors of feeling proud of EMU, willingness to choose EMU again, and willingness to recommend EMU to others, addressing EMU's reputation in these two areas will be of vital importance to better outcomes.

When designing goals to improve the students' experience, it would be remiss to dismiss these findings as the result of only isolated events affecting only those who were students during this time period. In fact, some indirect evidence from a different survey suggests that the Fall 2006 incoming student body had a similarly low opinion of EMU's reputation. The 2006 CIRP Peer Group Report (a national survey of incoming, first-year students/ 2006 CIRP Peer Group Report, <http://www.emich.edu/irim/>) is the source of this evidence.

The findings are too detailed to include in an Executive Summary, but should be carefully read in the full report as they suggest that our incoming students might enter with some aspects of their academic self-esteem lower than those attending other institutions. In addition to this Graduating Senior Assessment 2007 Report, the CIRP 2006 findings should be considered when defining goals and objectives to improve the academic journey of our students. The following are only a few examples from this important data source:

- When asked to report level of importance of various factors influencing the student's decision to attend their particular College:
 - "This college has a very good academic reputation," only 38.9% of EMU incoming-student respondents reported that this was a "very important" factor, compared to 49% of respondents from all other public, four-year colleges, and 70.8% of respondents from our peer institutions.

- “This college’s graduates get good jobs,” only 35.5% reported this factor to be very important compared to 44.1% from all other public, four-year colleges, and 59.2% of respondents from our peer institutions.
- When asked to estimate the likelihood that there would be a “very good” chance of doing each of the following:
 - Be satisfied with their College: EMU 42.3% verses Peer 59.7%.
 - Transfer to another college before graduating: EMU 11.4% verses Peer 6.3%.
 - Work full-time while attending college: EMU 13.4% verses Peer 5.7%.
- A higher percentage of EMU students than Peers reported “major concern” that they would not have enough funds to complete college (18.8% verses 9.2%)
- Respondents were asked to rate their self as “above average” compared with the average person his/her age in terms of the following:
 - Academic ability: EMU 58.7% verses Peer 79%.
 - Mathematical ability: EMU 33.3% verses Peer 54.3%.
 - Drive to achieve: EMU 66.2% verses Peer 77.9%.
 - Emotional health: EMU 52.5% verses Peer 59.5%.
 - Physical health: EMU 52% verses Peer 58.6%.

Ending this report by introducing CIRP data on incoming first-year students is not intended to dismiss the fact that real things do or do not happen during the course of an academic career that influence students’ level of reported satisfaction at the end. Data on incoming first-year students do have legitimate value at the end of a graduating

senior report, however, in suggesting to the institution the baseline from which our students' experience begins. For example, knowing that only 58.7% of EMU incoming students would rate themselves as "above average" in academic ability compared to 79% of students at EMU's peer institutions possibly sets their expectation about the quality of education they "deserve" to receive. It is vitally important, therefore, to use all available resources to make ourselves aware of the areas in which our students' needs may be different or greater than those of students at other universities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations that follow have emerged from the quantitative survey findings. Qualitative data gleaned from the open-ended survey responses and the 25 interviews that were conducted were used for their value in suggesting solutions to the problem areas that were identified. The recommendations themselves, however, were not based upon the qualitative data, given the small sample size vis-à-vis the population and the homogeneity of the interviewees.

A prerequisite to drawing forth recommendations, of course, is the establishment of a performance baseline, which is certainly a subjective decision. What exactly constitutes an "acceptable" level of satisfaction most often is influenced by multiple factors. To ground the recommendations contextually, each of the recommendations below begins with the Principle Investigator's data-driven rationale.

1. First and foremost, the results of the regression analysis used to predict respondents' willingness to recommend EMU to others must be addressed (on the assumption that this is the most appropriate measure of overall level of satisfaction with EMU). The recommendations that follow emerged from

the five predictor variables: willingness to choose EMU again; being proud to be associated with EMU; belief that EMU is managed as well as others its size; belief that they received a high quality education; and feeling safe from personal theft while on campus:

- a. Two key reputation-related factors must be addressed: quality of education and quality of institutional management.
- b. To a very large extent, the reputation of EMU among the students must first be restored. Repairing students' belief and confidence in EMU must emerge primarily from healing the relationship between students and the administration.
- c. The qualitative reports that academic rigor and standards were too low needs to be further explored as this might be influencing students' perception in the quality of their education. To begin this exploration, the following measures will be added to the next survey: "The courses within my major were sufficiently academically challenging;" and "The general education courses were sufficiently academically challenging."
- d. Campus safety must be addressed. Of the two safety-related measures, only feeling safe from personal theft predicted willingness to recommend EMU to others. Feeling safe from physical assault should not be dismissed as unimportant, however, given that 45.9% of the respondents had either no agreement (6.3%) or a low or moderate level of agreement (39.6%) with the statement that "While on campus, I felt safe from physical

assault.” The qualitative data highlighted three areas where students felt vulnerable: parking areas, the Library, and classrooms.

- e. To address the matter of pride in EMU, given the issues raised in the section regarding its reputation, attention must be given to restoring student confidence in their degree and to increasing the stature of EMU in the eyes of our students. Given the sociological importance of a strong identity around which group members can coalesce, the brand campaign (“Education First”), in particular the symbolism of “Eagle Nation” may have strong potential. Even among those who might have chosen a different brand, the mere existence of a clearly-stated identity might be effective.
 - f. The low level of satisfaction with the physical appearance of the classrooms must be addressed given the importance of the quality of one’s physical environment as a reflection on one’s worth. Only 31% of respondents reported either a high or very high level of satisfaction.
 - g. The low level of satisfaction with parking availability quite probably affects each of the following: satisfaction with management; academic performance (and therefore retention); feelings of safety; and a sense of belonging to EMU. As one interviewee stated, “It just feels like if EMU really wanted me to be here, it would find a suitable place for me to park. After all, most of us don’t live here. That’s what the administration doesn’t seem to get.”
2. The issue of quality of academic advising must be addressed. Pierce Hall received particularly low marks compared to advising from College and

faculty advisors, with a low mean level of satisfaction of 1.61 and only 25.3% reporting either a high or very high level of satisfaction with Pierce services. Conversely, academic advising from the College earned a mean score of 2.59, with 58.9% reporting either a high or very high level of satisfaction; faculty advising earned a mean score of 2.69, with 63% reporting either a high or very high level of satisfaction. The interviewees suggested that quality of advising is a key retention issue given that poor advising almost always results in a need for additional courses, accompanied by the following: stress; disappointment in EMU management; increased student loan debt; increased time away from current employment; a delay in graduation; and therefore a delay in entering more gainful employment.

3. The graduation audit processing time and audit information also warrants further investigation. In each case, about half reported either no satisfaction, low satisfaction, or only moderate satisfaction.
4. REC-IM and the Office of Financial Aide received mixed reviews, as well. Efforts should be made to better understand dissatisfaction.
5. Efforts should be made by departments and Schools to connect with students as soon as possible after declaring their major. Doing so should increase a sense of belonging, and should allow for greater contact with faculty. A suggestion made frequently during the interviews was to have a faculty mentor assigned to each student as soon as the student enters the major, and to have that faculty mentor remain with the student throughout their program. The interviewees explained that in this way, both continuity and

accountability would be possible, and more importantly, the student would more likely feel integrated into their major. Mentor/mentee relationships would also increase students' satisfaction with opportunities to interact with faculty outside the classroom, which was considerably lower than satisfaction with opportunities to interact with faculty in class (62.6% versus 83.2%, respectively).

6. The fact that 66.2% of the respondents reported never having accessed career counseling through Career Services demands a study into barriers to accessing these services. Given that only 31.1% reported having a job closely related to their major upon graduation and 44.9% were not employed but would be looking for employment after graduation, the low level of usage of this service center is counterintuitive.
7. Understanding the low level of satisfaction with Career Services reported by those who did use these services must be given high priority. In addition to the obvious problems associated with such a low level of satisfaction, this circumstance is very likely affecting its reputation, and therefore usage of Career Services. The qualitative reports suggested very strongly that students want faculty to be more involved in career advising because for various reasons, they view faculty as having greater authority in this area. Given this, perhaps stronger linkages should be made between Career Services and the various academic units.
8. Given that 48.1% of the respondents reported either no satisfaction (8.3%) or a low or moderate level of satisfaction (39.8%) with the system used to

evaluate faculty, this system should be studied to further understand students' relatively low level of satisfaction with the current system.

9. Length of time to complete the degree warrants investigation as 78.6% reported needing at least five to six years to complete their degree (43% between five and six years; 14.9% between seven and eight years; and 10.8% more than eight years), despite the fact that 76% attended mostly full-time. A statistical analysis of these two variables failed to find a statistically significant causal relationship between length of time necessary to complete the degree and frequency of attendance so clearly other contributing factors are unknown.
10. Given that around 40% of the respondents reported either no satisfaction or a low to moderate level of satisfaction with availability of required and elective courses within their major, a study of course scheduling should be undertaken. The qualitative data would suggest an assessment of the desirability of an increased number of night classes and a Monday-Wednesday course schedule (as opposed to MWF). Particularly for upper-level courses, interviewees reported a desire for late afternoon or night classes. They also reported that when having only MWF courses available to them, they most likely attended class on only two of those days (MW). Another related issue that emerged qualitatively was the need to have greater advance notice of course offerings so that students could better plan their schedules.

11. Given the very high percentage of those reporting intent to pursue a graduate program (78.8% Master's degree, 8.3% second Bachelor's degree, 10.6% a certificate or professional license), bodes well for EMU's graduate programs, particularly in light of the fact that 67.8% plan to remain in this geographic region (southeast Michigan). Given the increased enrollment these data suggest, an assessment of the experience of our current graduate students seems warranted.
12. The high percentage of those reporting absolutely no satisfaction with the services of Holman Learning Center (23.2%) and the Writing Center (23%) and the relatively low mean level of satisfaction (1.94 and 1.91) warrant further research. It may be logical and therefore tempting to assume that the remedial nature of these services would influence the level of reported satisfaction, but research is needed to determine the degree of that influence, as well as other factors that contribute to dissatisfaction.
13. There is a need to conduct a targeted study of lower-performing graduating seniors, given the problem of those with lower graduating GPAs having chosen to not participate in this research.
14. Consideration should be given to increasing mental health services on-campus, given what could be argued to be a relatively high level of usage of on-campus services (as well as CIRP 2006 data suggesting the incoming, first-year students believe themselves to have a lower quality of mental health than students at EMU's peer institutions).

15. Given the rather low level of those who reported that EMU had been their first choice, it is imperative to better understand what would make EMU students' first choice. The qualitative data suggested that one way of doing so would be to get a better sense of who our students are: overwhelmingly, the qualitative data suggest that the student who is a commuter and who is working while a student feels unseen.
16. It will be important to conduct ongoing assessments of our students' experience long before they apply for graduation. To address this need, as well as the increased needs for data for program review and accreditation, plans are underway for the Office of Institutional Assessment to conduct routine assessments of the Junior-Sophomore experience, in addition to continuation of the Graduating Senior Assessment.