



PRESENTATION HANDOUT



Why Student Satisfaction Matters for Student Success

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**Why does student
satisfaction matter?**



What does the
research show?

Student Satisfaction is linked with:



**Individual
student
retention**
(higher)

**Institutional
graduation
rates**
(higher)

**Institutional
alumni
giving**
(higher)

**Institutional
loan default
rates**
(lower)

Why Does Student Satisfaction Matter?

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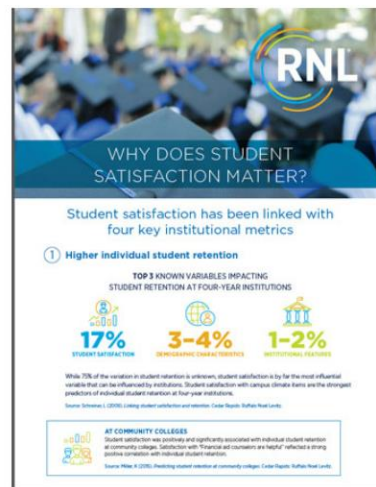
Download this four-page infographic to see how student satisfaction impacts institutional outcomes

Student satisfaction has been linked with four key institutional metrics:

1. Higher individual student retention
2. Higher institutional graduation rates
3. Higher institutional alumni giving rates
4. Lower loan default rates

See how in this infographic, which draws on multiple research studies to demonstrate the positive impact of high student satisfaction.

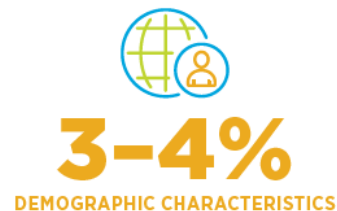
[Download now](#)



Positively linked with higher individual retention

① Higher individual student retention

TOP 3 KNOWN VARIABLES IMPACTING STUDENT RETENTION AT FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS



While 75% of the variation in student retention is unknown, student satisfaction is by far the most influential variable that can be influenced by institutions. Student satisfaction with campus climate items are the strongest predictors of individual student retention at four-year institutions.

Source: Schreiner, L. (2009). *Linking student satisfaction and retention*. Cedar Rapids: Ruffalo Noel Levitz.



AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Student satisfaction was positively and significantly associated with individual student retention at community colleges. Satisfaction with "Financial aid counselors are helpful" reflected a strong positive correlation with individual student retention.

Source: Miller, K (2015). *Predicting student retention at community colleges*. Cedar Rapids: Ruffalo Noel Levitz.

For more information see: www.RuffaloNL.com/assessment

② Higher institutional graduation rates

AVERAGE INSTITUTIONAL SATISFACTION SCORES

The percentage of students satisfied or very satisfied with their overall experience



The bar graphs reflect the average summary satisfaction scores for institutions in each category of low, medium and high graduation rates. In three of the four institution types, overall satisfaction is tied to graduation rates in a linear relationship.

Positively
linked with
higher
institutional
graduation
rates

For more information see: www.RuffaloNL.com/assessment

Effective Practices for Student Success

Practice	Institution Type	Using Method	Very or somewhat effective
Using student satisfaction assessments to make changes to address attrition	4-Year Private	89%	75%
	4-Year Public	77%	71%
	2-Year Public	90%	68%
Using an incoming student assessment to identify students' needs	4-Year Private	63%	70%
	4-Year Public	64%	72%
	2-Year Public	43%	61%



Utilizing student
satisfaction data
on your campus

A blue-tinted photograph of three people in a meeting. A woman on the left is pointing at a tablet held by a man in the center. A woman with glasses on the right is looking at the tablet. They are sitting around a table with papers and a laptop. The background shows a window with a view of a building.

Are you assessing
student satisfaction on
your campus?

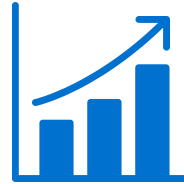
Data can help you:



Know what students think



Know what your students are experiencing



Know what they think you are doing well



Know what are their priorities for improvement

Post-Enrollment Analytics

Importance coupled
with



Satisfaction

Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys™

- Comprehensive assessment across all class levels
- Captures experiences both inside and outside of the classroom
- Completed during the academic year (either fall or spring) with an online administration
- Typically administered at least once every two years to track satisfaction shifts

Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys

Survey versions specific for the populations you are serving

**Student Satisfaction
Inventory (SSI):**
Traditional-aged
students

**Adult Student
Priorities
Survey (ASPS):**
Adult Graduate
and Undergrad

**Priorities Survey for
Online Learners
(PSOL):** Students in
Online Learning
Programs

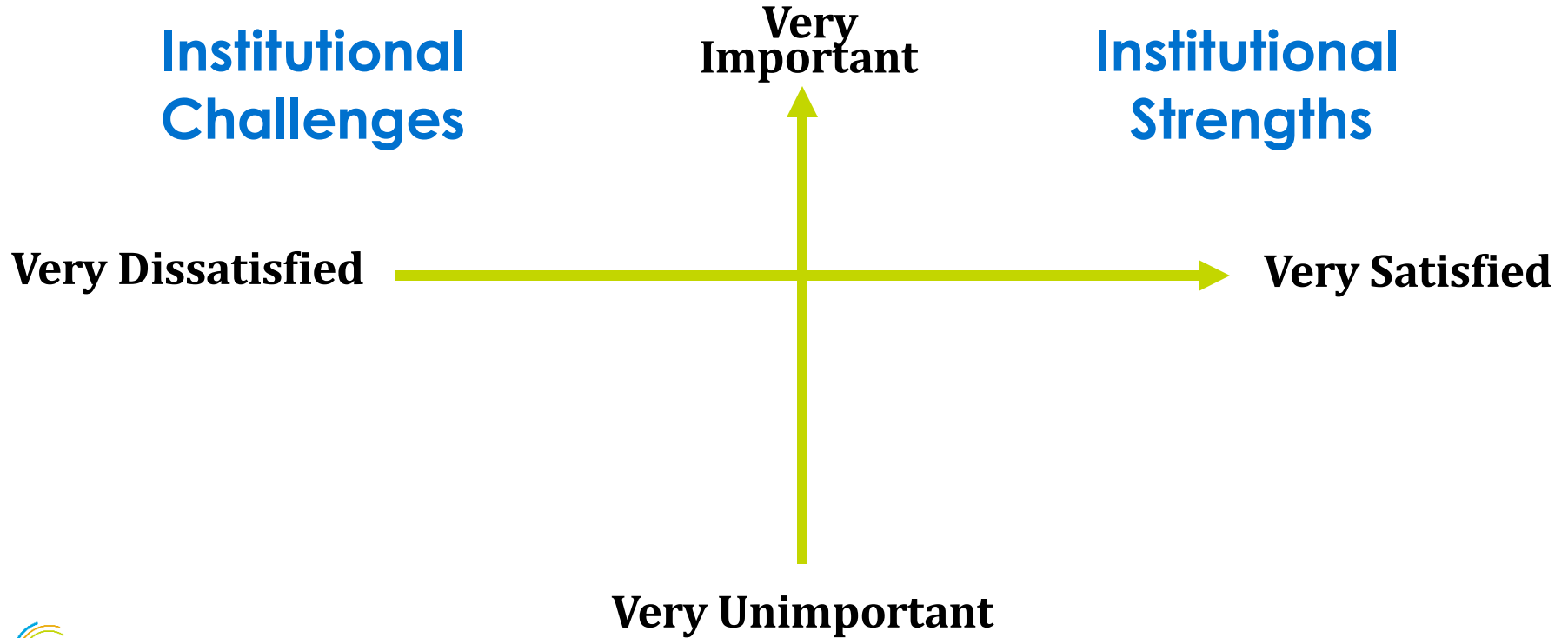
Definition of Satisfaction:

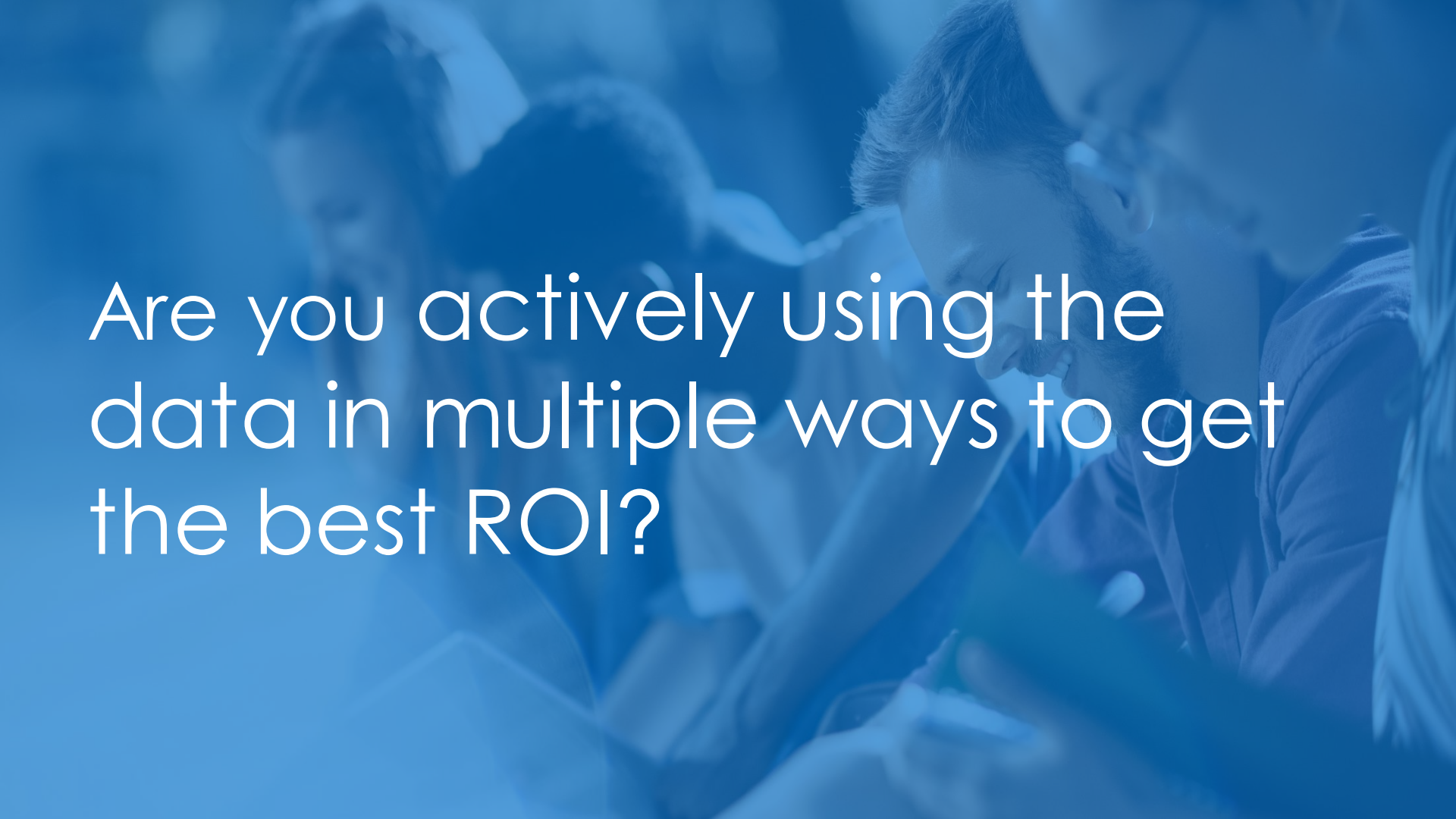
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When expectations are met or exceeded by the student's perception of the campus reality

Schreiner & Juillerat, 1994

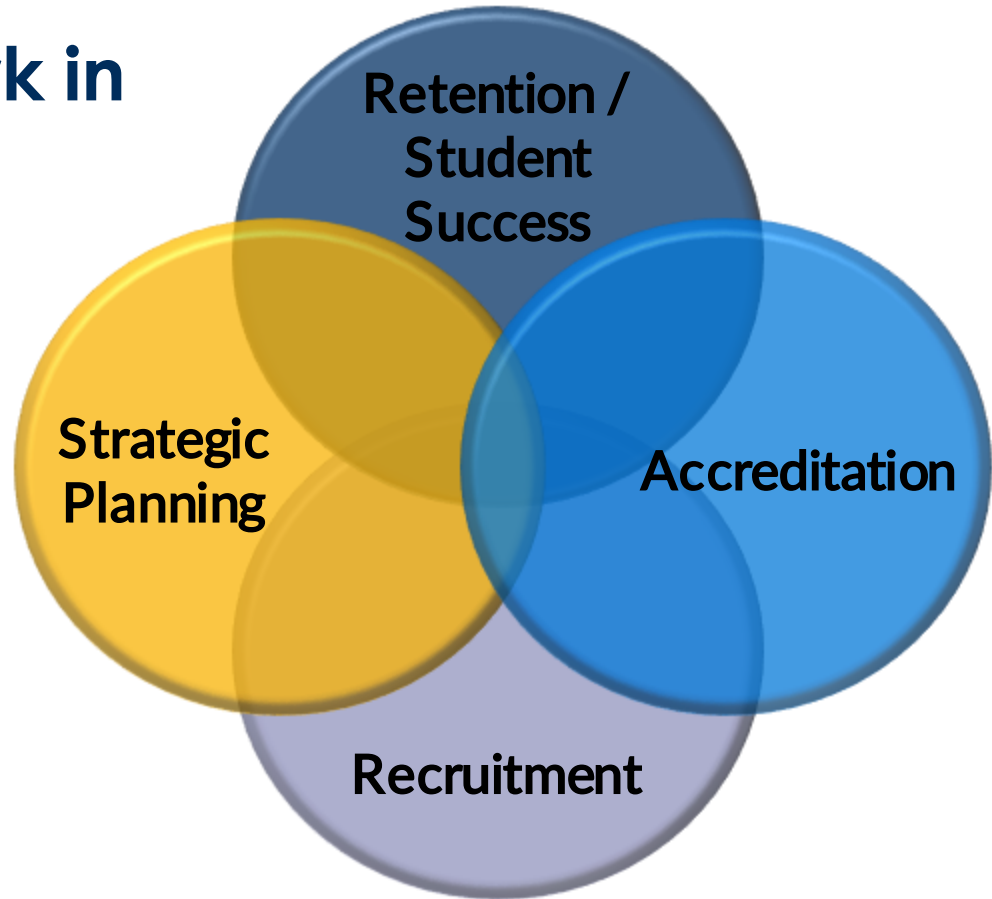
Matrix for prioritizing action





Are you actively using the data in multiple ways to get the best ROI?

**Informs your work in
multiple areas:**



Impacting retention / student success:



- Focus on campus climate items



- Celebrate your strengths



- Improve challenge items that students care about



- Communicate regarding changes made

Campus climate items:

- The campus is safe and secure for all students.
- Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.
- It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.
- The campus staff are caring and helpful.
- This institution shows concern for students as individual.
- Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.
- Most students feel a sense of belonging here.



Examples of institutional strengths to celebrate:

- My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major.
- There is a commitment to academic excellence at this campus.
- I am able to experience intellectual growth here.
- This institution has a good reputation in the community.
- Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.
- Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.
- Tutoring services are readily available.



Examples of priority areas of challenge to improve:



- I am able to register for classes with few conflicts.
- Adequate financial aid is available for most students.
- Financial aid counselors are helpful.
- Financial aid awards are announced in time to be helpful in college planning.
- Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.
- Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly.
- Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.

Posters on campus are a powerful communication tool



You said this . . .


We've done that . . .




We're Listening to U

In November 595 students responded to a M.C. assessment about student satisfaction. This is what you said and what M.C. is doing to improve your experience.

You Said...

83% of students said MC was their 1st or 2nd choice college	Academic Advising is... #1 in student importance AND satisfaction	M.C.'s Academic reputation is EXCELLENT!	MC vs. nationally similar schools...  are more available, caring, & helpful
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Your Campus Challenges

Connecting to the internet is difficult. 	You lack clear ways to express complaints	Unsure how Student Fees were used.	You want less run-around when seeking campus info.
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What McPherson College is Doing

INTERNET Pilot testing coaxial cable in dorms Applying for a SLEM technology grant	SGA AVENUES -Dorm guides -Social Networking for expression	Fees included in catalog/website "Spectator" article published 3/2/12	RUN-AROUND -Focus Groups students faculty/staff -Committee formed
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Student Satisfaction and Priorities

STUDENT SATISFACTION INVENTORY™ RESULTS, Term ADMINISTRATION

School Name # Students (Number of students/average)

Student satisfaction is defined as "when expectations are met or exceeded by the student's perception of the campus reality." **Remember perception is reality!**

*Ruffalo & Johnson, 2009

Why does student satisfaction matter?

Student satisfaction has been positively linked to:

Individual student retention

Annual giving

College completion rates

Priorities for Our Students

Matrix for prioritizing actions:

	Very Important	Institutional Strengths
Very Unsatisfied	←	→
	Very Unsatisfied	Very Satisfied

1 Our Institutional Strengths

These are the top areas our students care about, where we are meeting their expectations.

1. List top areas:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

2 Our Institutional Challenges

These items are the key areas to improve, based on the priorities of our students."

1. List areas to improve:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

3 Next steps on our campus:

Enter next steps:

4 The Importance of Institutional Choice

Students attending their first choice institution are more likely to have higher satisfaction levels overall. The percentage of our students indicating that we are their:

1ST CHOICE	<input type="text"/> %
2ND CHOICE	<input type="text"/> %
3RD CHOICE OR LOWER	<input type="text"/> %

5 What Factors Influence Our Student to Enroll?

It is important to understand why students enroll here. The percentage of students saying the following factors were important or very important:

FINANCIAL AID	<input type="text"/> %
COST	<input type="text"/> %
ACADEMIC REPUTATION	<input type="text"/> %

6 Bottom Line Indicators

How satisfied are our students compared with students nationally?

PERCENTAGE SATISFIED/VERY SATISFIED	<input type="text"/> %
NATIONAL LEVEL SATISFIED/VERY SATISFIED	<input type="text"/> %

How likely are our students to enroll again if they had it to do over?

PERCENTAGE PROBABLY/DEFINITELY YES	<input type="text"/> %
NATIONAL LEVEL PROBABLY/DEFINITELY YES	<input type="text"/> %

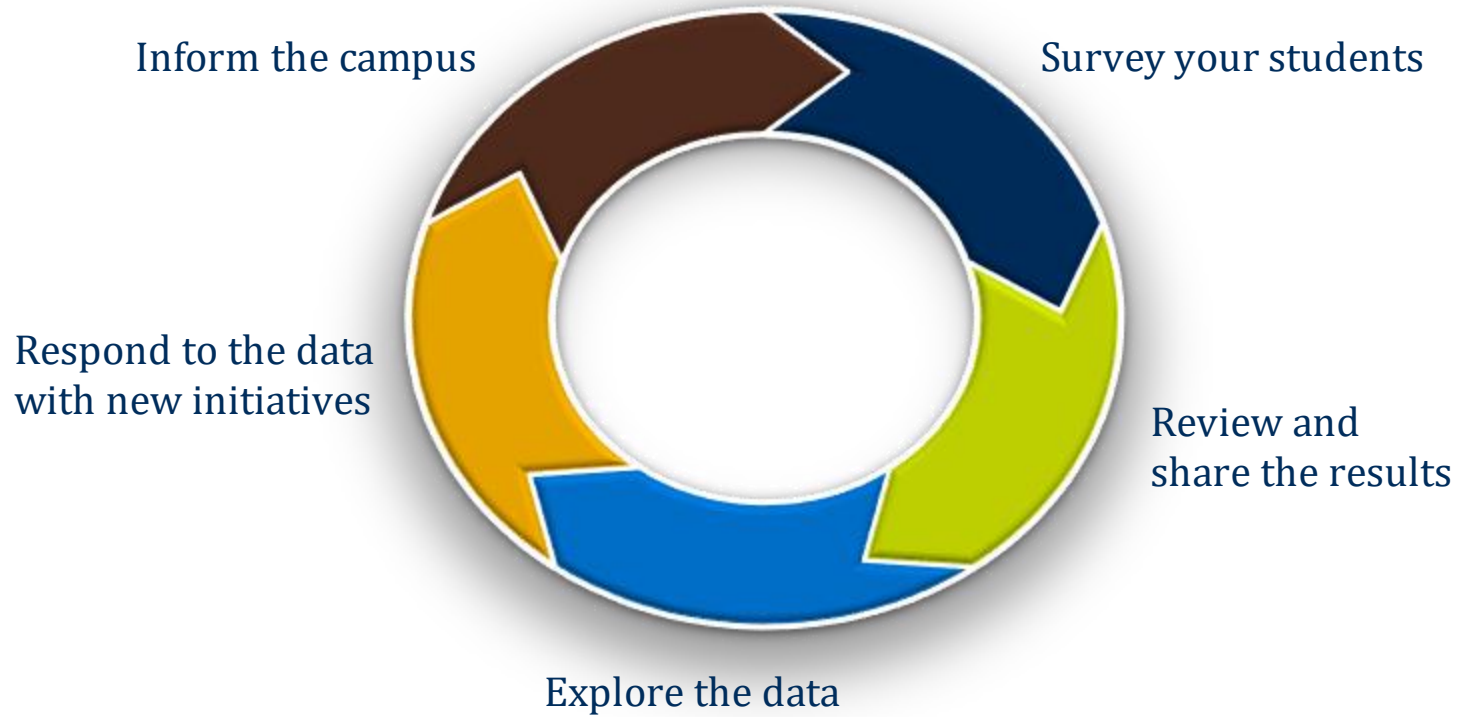
**These areas will be further explored with additional data analysis and conversations on campus to determine how to best improve the student experience.

For more information, contact: Contact name, title, email address

Student Satisfaction: Data to Highlight



Systematic Assessment Cycle





Share the data
far and wide



Relevant Data for Various Departments

Data for Various Campus Segments

Request the Handout for More Information

Data for:

- Everyone
- Directors of Retention / Student Success
- Accreditation Committees / Leaders
- Institutional Research Offices
- Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Enrollment Managers . . .

Data for Academic Affairs

Data Points for Faculty, Deans, Directors

- Instruction and academic advising items (strengths and challenges and comparisons to the national data)
 - Quality of instruction; variety of courses; virtual instruction; faculty provide timely feedback; advisors knowledgeable
- Registration effectiveness items regarding course access
- Item: Institutional commitment to academic excellence
- Data sliced for indicated major/program

Data for Student Affairs

Data Points for Deans, Directors and Staff

- Campus climate items
 - Sense of belonging, made to feel welcome
- Campus support service items
 - Career services, orientation, tutoring
- Campus life items
 - Residence halls, food service

Data for Enrollment Managers

Data Points for Admissions and Financial Aid Departments

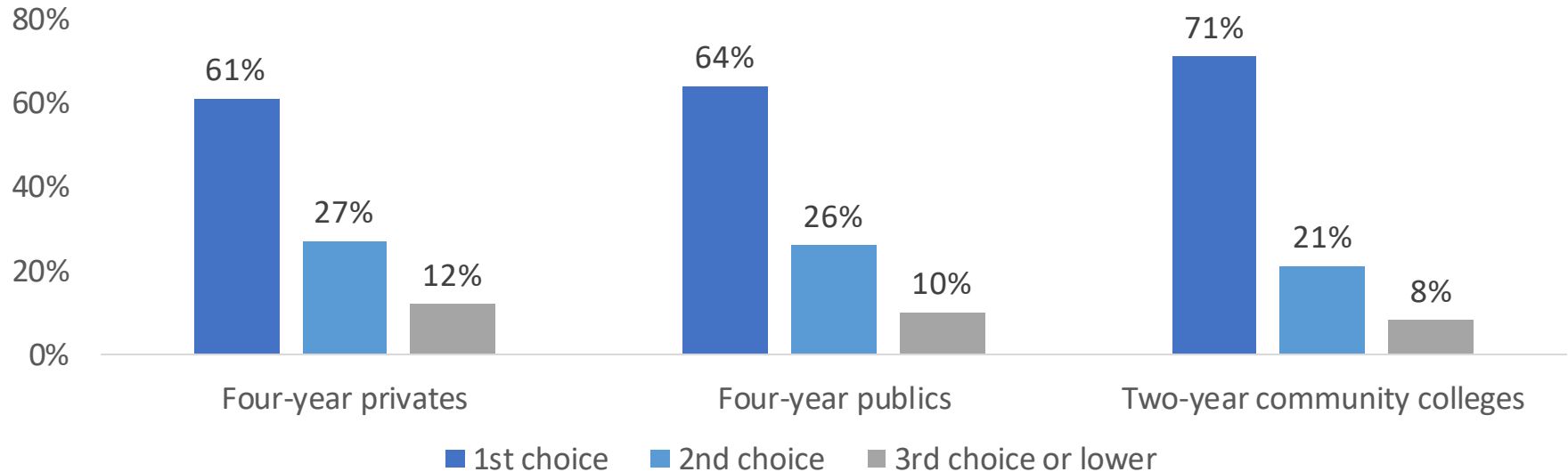
- Factors in the decision to enroll
- Percentage of students indicating the institution is their first choice
- Admissions and financial aid items
 - Financial aid counselors available, admissions staff knowledgeable
- Key areas of higher satisfaction vs. national comparisons
- Top strengths for marketing materials



Data informed
recruiting to
retain students

What percentage of students indicate they are attending their first-choice institution?

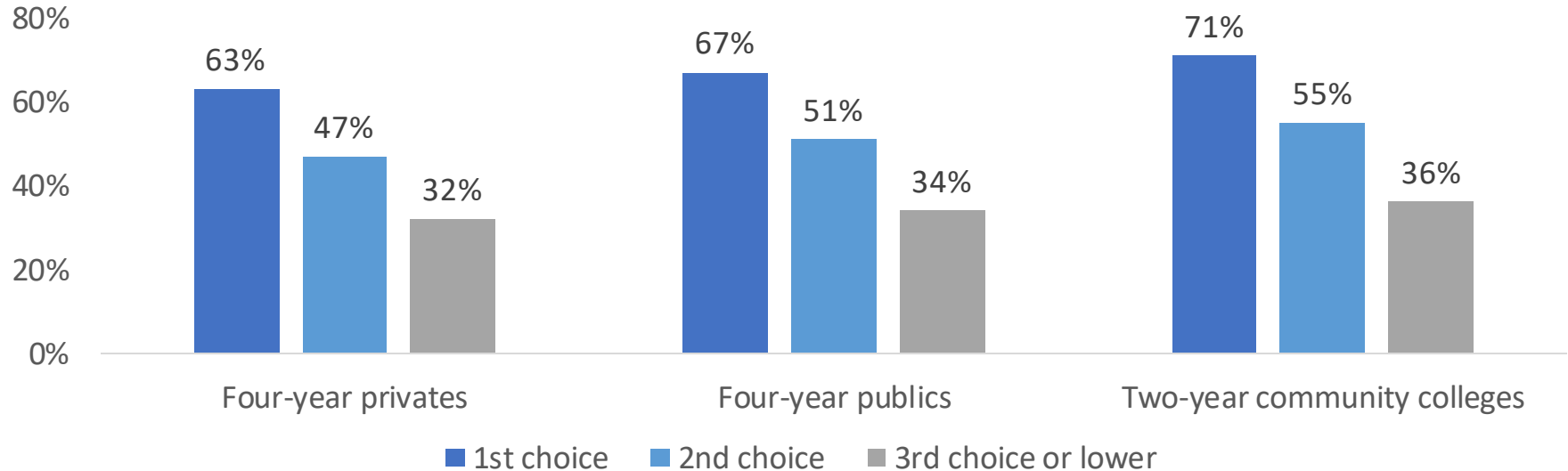
Institutional Choice Percentages



Satisfaction Levels by Institutional Choice

First choice students are the most satisfied overall

Percent Satisfied/Very Satisfied by Institutional Choice



The recruitment / retention connection

Recruit 1st choice
students



Higher satisfaction
levels

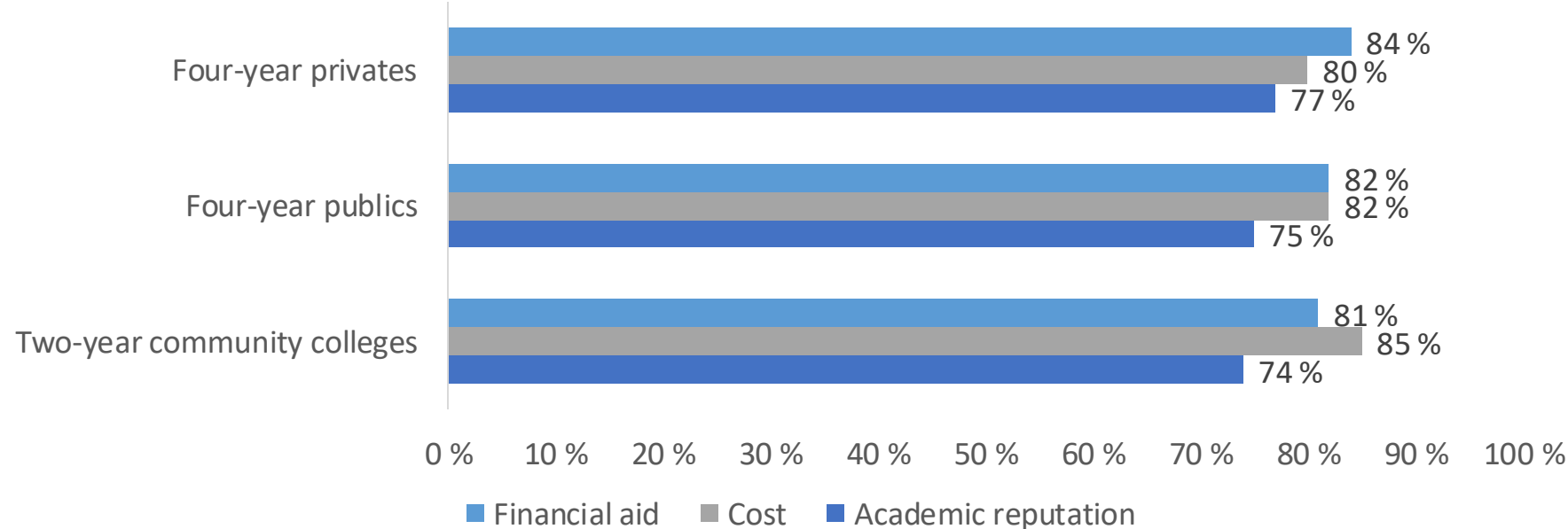


Students with higher
satisfaction levels
more likely to persist

Factors in the Decision to Enroll

Top Three by Institutional Type

Factors in the decision to enroll





Take action to
improve student
satisfaction

Why make improvements?

No Action



No Change in
Satisfaction



“

Targeted, specific
changes can make
a big impression.”

SSI Client



Three ways to address your challenges

What can you change?

Makes changes in:

- Processes
- Policies
- Perceptions



I am able to register for classes with few conflicts.

Examples of possible responses

- **Explore:** Data by class level; by program
- **Focus group question:** What conflicts have you experienced with registration?
- **Immediate response:** Add online seats for hybrid course options
- **Longer term:** Add sections of high demand courses with additional faculty
- **Communication:** Let students know the registration process for who gets access to courses when; Inform on improvements made

Other ideas?

Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.

Examples of possible responses

- **Explore:** Data by class level; by program
- **Focus group question:** What do you consider timely feedback?
- **Immediate response:** Work with faculty to identify consistent response times
- **Longer term:** Utilize appropriate platforms for student progress
- **Communication:** Share with students expected response times for quizzes and papers on the syllabus; include as a footer on all faculty signature lines; frequently inform students of the expected response time

Financial aid awards are announced in time.

Examples of possible responses

- **Explore:** Data by class level; enrollment status (full-time / part-time)
- **Focus group question:** What are your experiences with financial aid?
- **Immediate response:** Identify gaps in service and streamline
- **Longer term:** Add financial aid staff as needed
- **Communication:** Share with students (and families) their responsibility with meeting financial aid deadlines; Break financial aid info down into smaller nuggets

Other ideas?

“

Don't try to do everything on your challenges list. Target key areas where you can get something done.”

SSI Client

An aerial photograph of a coastline, showing a wide expanse of blue water meeting a white sandy beach. The water is a deep, clear blue, and the beach is a bright, clean white. The sky is a pale, hazy blue, suggesting a clear day. The overall scene is serene and natural.

Last Take-away...

Wise words from
a President...

“

The feedback our students provide to us with the student satisfaction data is a **gift** that we need to take seriously and use wisely.

President of an SSI Client Institution



Resources from RNL

Blog Site: www.RuffaloNL.com/Blog

The screenshot displays the RuffaloNL website's navigation menu with links for Enrollment, Student Success, Fundraising, Consulting, Resources, and About RNL. The main header features the 'EDUCATION INSIGHTS BLOG' title and a 'Subscribe' button. A search bar is located on the right side of the header.

The featured article is titled 'Tracking Student Satisfaction – Measuring to Get It Done' and is categorized under 'student success'. The author is Julie Bryant, Associate Vice President of Retention Solutions, with a publication date of February 28, 2019. The article text reads: 'The phrase, "what gets measured, gets done," has been attributed to Michael Porter, a professor at Harvard Business School. I have also seen the statement, "what gets measured, gets improved," attributed to Peter Drucker. No matter who said it, the concept is well recognized.'

The article includes a photograph of a person's arm wearing a black FitBit fitness tracker. Below the image, a caption states: 'Tracking student satisfaction is like using a fitness tracker. You need to check data regularly and adjust behavior to achieve positive change.'

On the left side of the article, there are social media sharing icons for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The beginning of another paragraph is visible at the bottom: 'I have found myself



Search on the word: Satisfaction

Download the National Reports

www.RuffaloNL.com/papers



2021 Effective Practices
for Student Success,
Retention, and
Completion Report



2021 National
First-Year Students
and Their Motivation to
Complete College Report

A study of the challenges and opportunities for completing
a college degree, based on an analysis of more than
85,000 first-year college students.



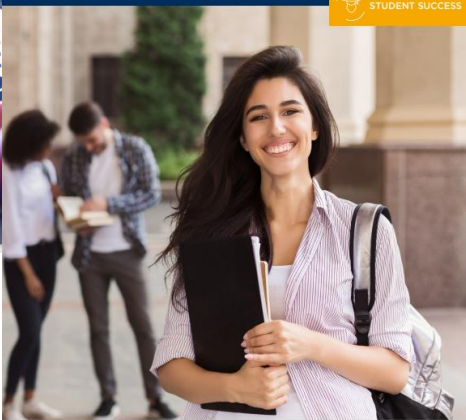
2021 National Student
Satisfaction and
Priorities Report

Based on 397,571 student records at four-year
and two-year colleges and universities



2020 Student Success
and Retention Benchmarks

For first-year, second-year, and transfer students
at four-year private and public institutions.



Want to bring these ideas back to your campus?

Schedule a free, virtual conversation with the leadership on your campus

Contact me to schedule a mutually convenient time



Thank you for joining me!



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