



RNL Student Success: Systematic Student Satisfaction Assessment

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Our conversation today

1. The importance of capturing student perceptions
2. Overcoming internal barriers for administering assessments
3. Best practices for higher response rates
4. Case study Jean-Noel Thompson, Harding University and Faulkner University
5. Key takeaways and resources



The Importance of Capturing Students' Perceptions

Why should we survey?

No Data



No Direction

on how to impact
student satisfaction



Definition of Satisfaction:

“

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

Schreiner & Juillerat, 1994

Student Satisfaction is linked with:



**Individual
student
retention**
(higher)

**Institutional
graduation
rates**
(higher)

**Institutional
alumni
giving**
(higher)

**Institutional
loan default
rates**
(lower)

Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys

Select the combination of surveys for your student populations

**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

The RNL surveys capture both an importance score and a satisfaction score

STUDENT SATISFACTION INVENTORY 4-YEAR FORM A
Ruffalo Noel Levitz (mock)

About the responses

Each item below describes an expectation about your experiences on this campus.

On the left, tell us how important it is for your institution to meet this expectation.

On the right, tell us how satisfied you are that your institution has met this expectation.

Level of importance...

- 1 - Not important at all
- 2 - Not very important
- 3 - Somewhat unimportant
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Somewhat important
- 6 - Important
- 7 - Very important
- N/A - Does not apply

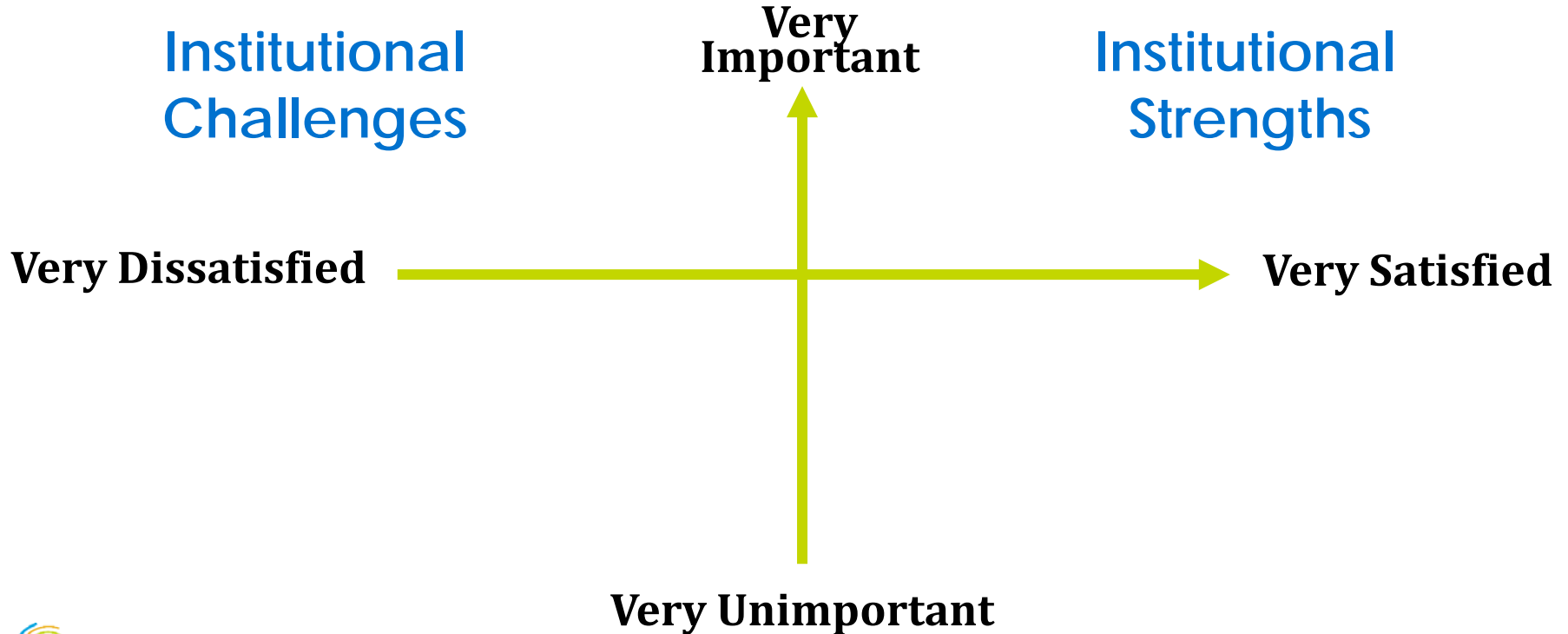
...Level of satisfaction

- 1 - Not satisfied at all
- 2 - Not very satisfied
- 3 - Somewhat dissatisfied
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Somewhat satisfied
- 6 - Satisfied
- 7 - Very satisfied
- N/A - Not available/not used

1. Most students feel a sense of belonging here.

The combination allows you to review your satisfaction results within the context of what is most important to your students.

Matrix for prioritizing action



SPS Results: Provide a clear indication of student identified strengths and challenges

Strengths

Item
★ Campus item 5
★ Campus item 9
★ I am able to experience intellectual growth here.
★ Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.
★ This institution shows concern for students as individuals.
★ Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.
★ My academic advisor is approachable.
★ There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.
★ The campus staff are caring and helpful.
★ Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.
★ Faculty care about me as an individual.
★ This institution has a good reputation within the community.

Strengths are items with high importance and high satisfaction.

These are specifically identified as items above the mid-point in importance (top half) and in the upper quartile (25 percent) of our satisfaction scores. The strengths are listed in descending order of importance.

Challenges

Item
❑ The content of the courses within my major is valuable.
❑ The campus is safe and secure for all students.
❑ The instruction in my major field is excellent.
❑ I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.
❑ Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.
❑ Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.
❑ Adequate financial aid is available for most students.
❑ Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.
❑ There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.
❑ Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.
❑ Adjunct faculty are competent as classroom instructors.
❑ Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate space, lighting, heat, air, etc.)
❑ Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course.
❑ There are adequate services to help me decide upon a career.
❑ Counseling staff care about students as individuals.

Challenges are items with high importance and low satisfaction or a large performance gap.

These are specifically identified as items above the mid-point in importance (top half) and in the lower quartile (25 percent) of your satisfaction scores or items above the mid-point in importance (top half) and in the top quartile (25 percent) of our performance gap scores. The performance gap score is likely the reason the item has been identified as a challenge. The challenges are listed in descending order of importance.

Main Report

Demo - SSI 4YR 2023-Jan 2023

Bottom Line Indicators

Satisfied / Very Satisfied

How satisfied are our students compared with students nationally?

Percentages below indicate the students indicating Satisfied/Very Satisfied.

71%

Our Institution

55%

National

Probably / Definitely Yes

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

Percentages below indicate the students indicating Probably/Definitely yes.

77%

Our Institution

59%

National

Gender

Demographic Responses

	N	%
Female	170	68.27%
Male	79	31.73%
Prefer not to respond	0	0.00%
Transgender	0	0.00%
Genderqueer	0	0.00%
Additional gender category or Other	0	0.00%
Total	249	100.00%
No Answer	11	

Class Level

Demographic Responses

	N	%
Freshman	60	24.19%
Sophomore	57	22.98%
Junior	74	29.84%
Senior	53	21.37%
Special student	1	0.40%
Graduate/Professional	0	0.00%
Other class level	3	1.21%
Total	248	100.00%
No Answer	12	

Institutional Choice

Demographic Responses

	N	%
1st choice	190	76.92%
2nd choice	41	16.60%
3rd choice or lower	16	6.48%
Total	247	100.00%
No Answer	13	

Students attending their first-choice institution are more likely to have higher satisfaction levels overall.

Top 5 Factors to Enroll

Item

Importance %

Financial aid as factor in decision to enroll.	88%
Cost as factor in decision to enroll.	77%
Academic reputation as factor in decision to enroll.	74%
Personalized attention prior to enrollment as factor in decision to enroll.	64%
Size of institution as factor in decision to enroll.	57%

Additional Benefits

Wealth of data included automatically with your deliverable

- The ability to slice and dice your data by all the demographic variables, on the fly.
- Internal and external comparison data points



Overcoming Internal Barriers

Potential barriers for survey push-back from campus leaders/administration/faculty

1. Survey fatigue / too many surveys
2. No action taken from past assessment results
3. Question the value of survey data – What's in it for me?
4. Other barriers you may have encountered

Understand the priorities of your currently enrolled students

Satisfaction within
the context

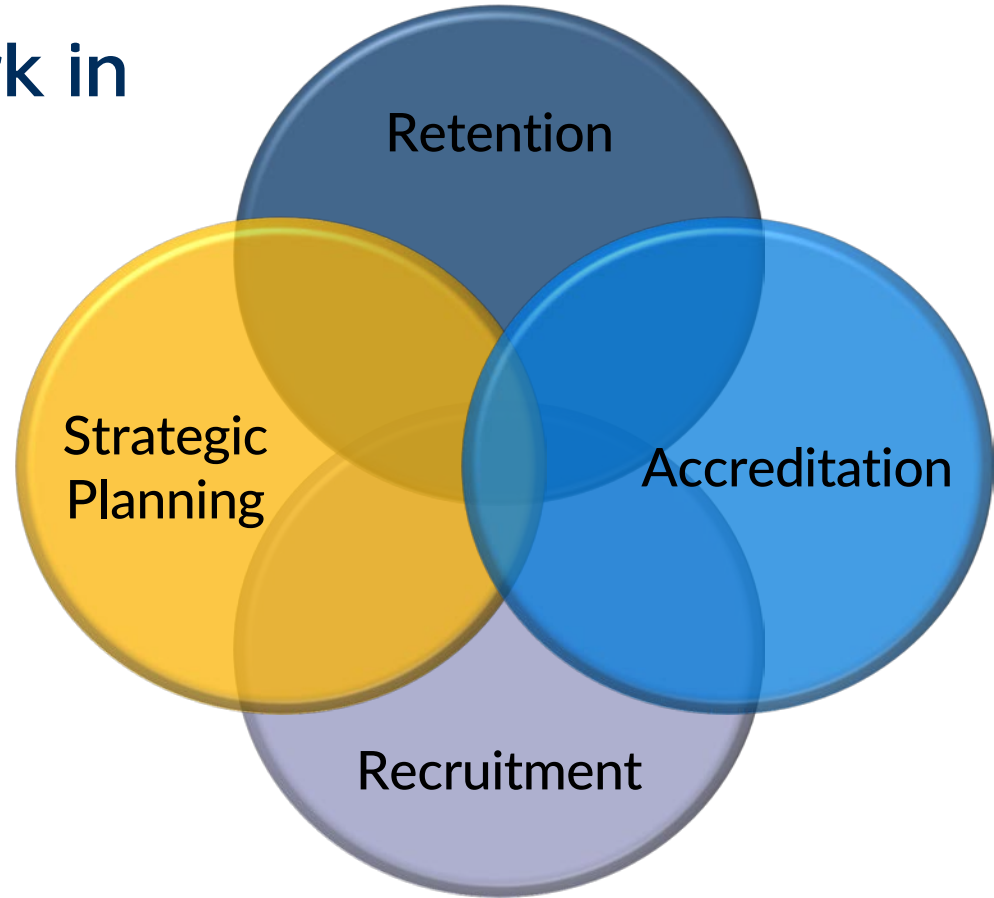


of what is
Important
to your students

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
- Results available in an interactive dashboard within three weeks
- Typically administered at least once every two years to track satisfaction shifts

**Informs your work in
multiple areas:**



A group of five diverse business professionals are seated around a conference table in a meeting room. The scene is dimly lit with a blue color overlay. In the foreground, a man with a beard and glasses is gesturing with his hands while speaking. To his right, a woman with glasses is listening intently. In the background, another man and woman are looking at a laptop screen. The table is cluttered with papers, a green mug, and a pen. The text "What's in it for me?" is centered over the image in a white, sans-serif font.

What's in it for me?



Relevant Data for Various Departments

Specific Data

Data points for various departments

- Enrollment Managers
- Academic Affairs
- Student Affairs
- Directors of Retention and Student Success
- Accreditation
- Institutional Researchers



Response Rates

How will we EVER get our students to take a survey?

Creating survey awareness is a MUST

- Pre-survey communication
 - Send an email locally, creating awareness for the survey
 - Let the students know why completing the survey is instrumental to their student experience (if we don't know what's wrong, we can't fix/address it).
 - Highlight any changes that have been made as a result of previous survey data so students understand that the data does in fact get used.
 - Short video introducing the survey, noting its importance
 - Featuring your President, Student Ambassador, Various Departments



TRENDING-Incentives for Response Rates

- Create momentum with your incentives
 - Weekly give-a-ways/create a sense of urgency
 - Celebrate your winners/fear of missing out
- Think outside the gift card box
 - Lunch with the president (offering an experience)
 - College swag (apparel, stadium blanket, umbrella)
 - Parking pass for a semester or year
 - Extra credit
 - Priority registration
 - Prime room draw/room assignment
 - Experiences (social media feed)
 - Partner with local events for tickets
 - Something for everyone

NEW-Survey Access for Students

- Historically:
 - Email messages with personal URLs, sent from RNL's system
- NEW:
 - Survey link that is unique to institution but generic to student; students must self-identify
 - Mail merge sent locally (from your email) with personal URLs
- Allows for greater visibility via:
 - QR codes
 - Post on social media
 - Text messages
 - No phishing warning from an outside source

A blue-tinted photograph of three people in a meeting. A woman with curly hair is in the center, looking towards the right. To her left, a man in a suit is partially visible, looking towards her. To her right, another man is looking down, possibly at a document. The text "The Power to Impact Change is Yours" is overlaid in white, centered on the image.

The Power to Impact
Change is Yours



Case Study
Harding University &
Faulkner University

“

“ Making the Most of the SSI
Through a Campus-wide
Engagement Approach”

Dr. Jean-Noel Thompson

Executive Vice President

Harding University

Brief Background of My Experience Administering the SSI

- Faulkner University, Montgomery, AL
 - The SSI Administered 3 Consecutive Years
 - Achieved a 62% Response Rate
 - Extensive use for Retention Purposes
- Harding University, Searcy AR
 - Year 1 of 3 on the SSI
 - 68% Response Rate in Year 1
 - Extensive Use for Strategic Planning Purposes

Overview of Strategies

- Proven strategies for obtaining high survey response rates.
- Proven strategies in engaging students in post survey improvement initiatives
- Proven strategies for campus-wide collaboration and partnership around SSI Initiatives

Obtaining High Survey Response Rates.

- Captive Audience Opportunities
 - Chapel
 - Sports Teams and Student Clubs& Orgs.
- Approach Students as “Change Agents”
-
- Pursue “Mass Incentives” in addition to give-a-way prizes

Engaging Students in Post Survey Improvement Initiatives

- Report results back to the masses
 - Complete transparency is critical
 - End on a positive & opportunistic note
 -
- Invite students to participate on “Planning Teams” around the greatest challenge areas for your institution

Campus-wide Collaboration and Partnership

- KEY – Campus-wide Communication & Buy-in!!!
- Direct and in person communication with faculty and staff
- Affirm areas and/or departments of strength
- Departmental engagement in relevant data
- Strategic Planning Process
- Accreditation Process Opportunities

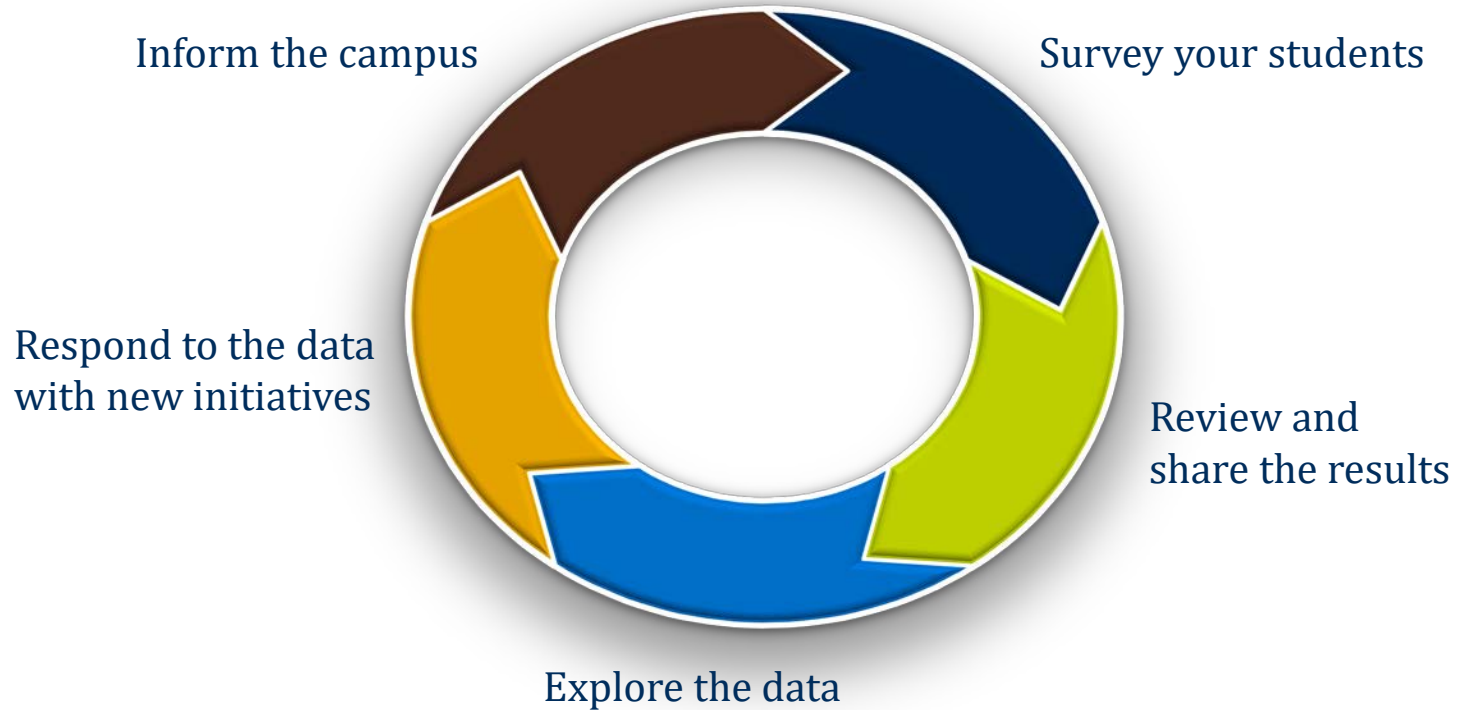
A blue-tinted photograph of three people in a meeting. A woman on the left is pointing at a tablet held by a man in the center. A woman on the right is looking at the tablet. They are standing around a table with papers and a laptop. The text "Q & A" is overlaid in the center in white.

Q & A



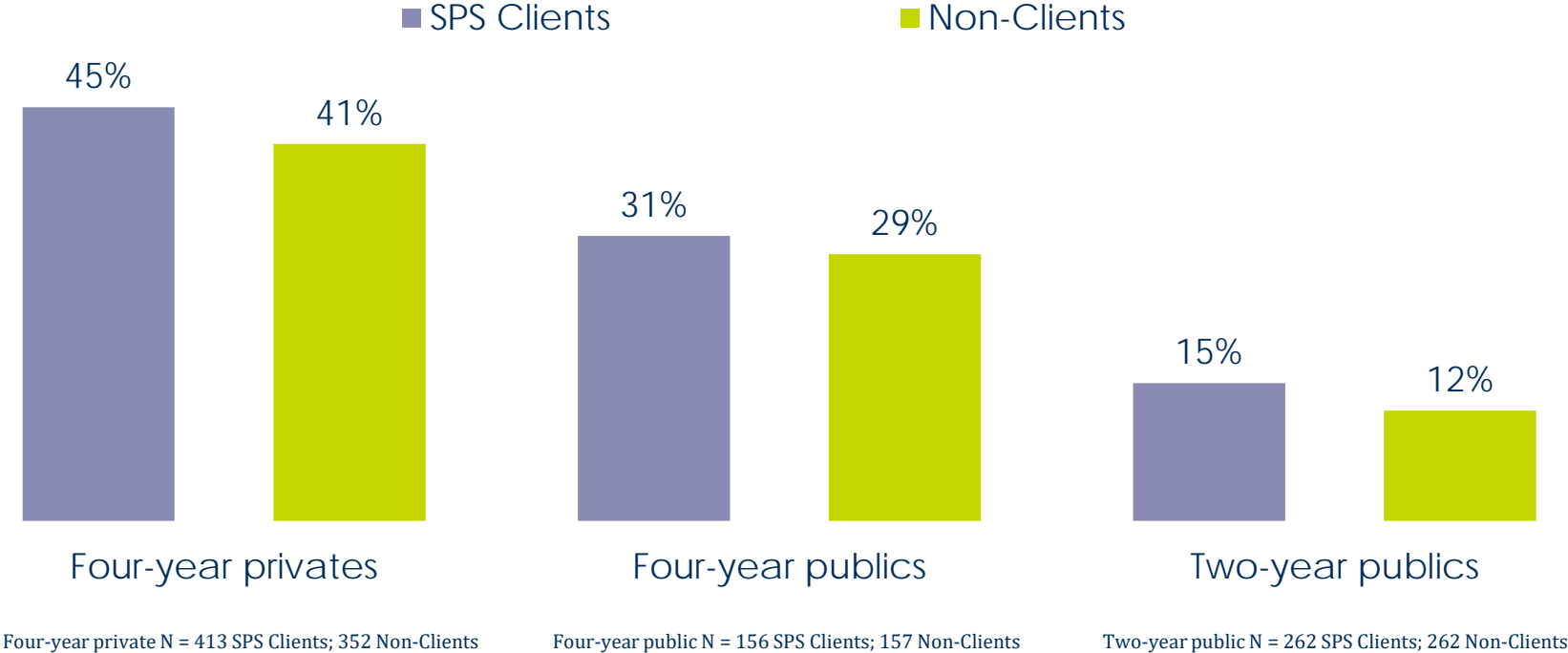
Key Takeaways and Resources

What you do after you survey matters...



Ongoing cycle, not just once and done

Graduation Rates for SPS Clients vs. Non-Clients Across Institution Types



RNL (2023). Internal Proprietary Data. Ruffalo Noel Levitz, Cedar Rapids, IA.
U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), [2018], Graduation Rates. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data-on-01/08/2023>

What makes RNL satisfaction assessment unique:

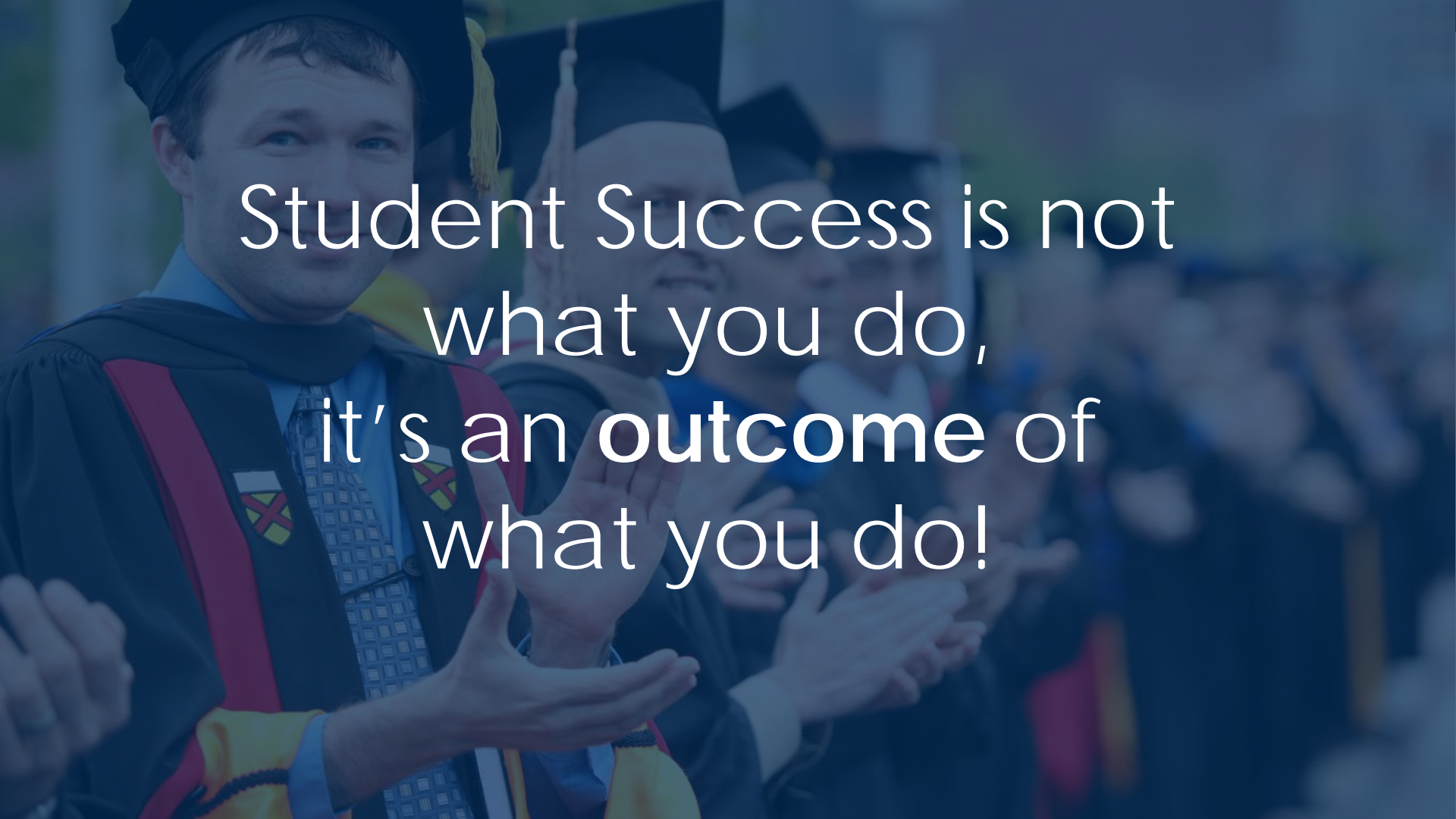
- Measure both importance and satisfaction
- Clearly identifies your unique strengths and challenges
- National benchmark data specific to your institution type and student population (traditional, adult, online, graduate)
- Ability to see results for all sub-populations
- Efficient turnaround time for delivery of results
- Data is actionable
- Regional accreditation mapping
- Your timeline is our timeline
- Cost effective



Guiding Questions

Planning for Systematic Student Satisfaction Assessment

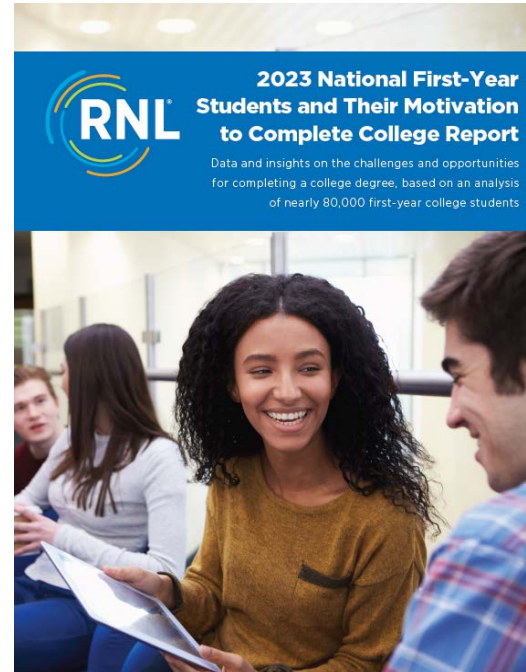
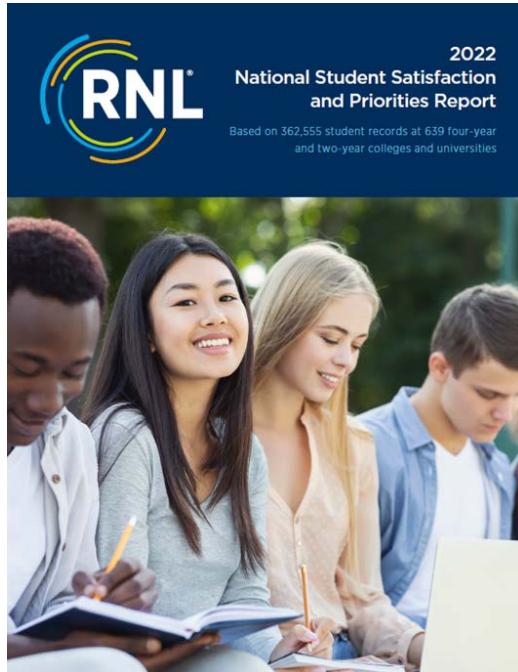
- What does student surveying look like at your institution today?
 - How closely does this align with your vision for student success over the next three years?
- What barriers exist to implementing student assessments on your campus?
- How will you measure student satisfaction? Do you have the tools you need?
- Are your current goals appropriate for the specific populations you wish to impact?
- Are you prepared to take actions with your findings?
- How will you communicate progress to the campus community?

A photograph of a graduate in a black cap and gown with red and yellow sashes, clapping. Other graduates are visible in the background, also clapping. The image has a blue tint.

Student Success is not
what you do,
it's an **outcome** of
what you do!

Download the National Data Reports

Available at RuffaloNL.com/papers



We may have Satisfaction-Priorities data on file for your institution . . .

Use this QR code and fill out the Google form.

We will be in touch with a high-level overview of the data we have on file for your institution.



Thank you for joining us today



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