



# Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys

Interpretive Guide Addendum:  
Institutional Priorities Survey™

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## Addendum: The Institutional Priorities Survey™

The Institutional Priorities Survey™ (IPS) closely parallels the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). Its items are carefully worded to mirror the items on the SSI. While the SSI is designed to measure students' satisfaction with a wide range of college experiences, the IPS assesses the priority faculty, staff, and administrators believe students place on the same range of student experiences.

By administering both the IPS and SSI, your institution can determine the discrepancies between what students expect and what faculty, staff, and administrators believe. By using the IPS and SSI at or near the same time, you'll be able to directly compare importance and agreement/satisfaction scores for each segment of your campus.

Left unexamined, competing priorities can slow the progress on your campus. Used in conjunction with your SSI data, the IPS identifies areas of agreement and disagreement before you propose new initiatives. With the results in hand, you can target areas for intervention with greater confidence and be alerted to areas in need of further examination.

The IPS asks campus personnel to respond with a level of importance and a level of agreement. A performance gap is calculated by subtracting the agreement score from the importance score.

### Versions of the IPS

The Institutional Priorities Survey is available in the following versions:

#### Four-Year College and University Version

- Form A is the original version
- Form B is the shorter version
- Note that national comparisons are available separately for private and public four-year institutions.

#### Two-year Community, Junior, and Technical College Version

- Form A is the original version
- Form B is the shorter version

### Item Structure on the IPS

The number of items rated for importance and agreement varies by version:

- Four-year Form A: 50 items
- Four-year Form B: 45 items
- Two-year Community College Form A: 50 items
- Two-year Community College Form B: 40 items

Each of the survey versions includes ten optional items which may be defined by the institution and rated for importance and agreement. The text of your campus items is included in your results.

The Form A version of the survey includes six items that assess the institution's commitment to specific student populations. These items are rated for agreement only and do not include importance or performance gap scores. These items contribute to the Responsiveness to Diverse Populations Scale.

Form A and Form B both include enrollment factors. Form A has nine items and Form B has eight items. These items only ask for an importance rating and do not include satisfaction or performance gap scores.

Three summary items are included in each of the surveys.

There are eight demographic items on each of the survey versions.

Each survey version includes two optional demographic items with up to fifteen responses (campus personnel may only select one response). The text of these items is included in the results.

Each survey version includes an optional demographic item to capture the responder's department with a four-digit numeric code. Again, the text of these items is included in your results.

## The Scales

The items on the IPS have been analyzed statistically and conceptually to form comprehensive scales. Note that some items appear on more than one scale. The number of scales for each version is as follows. A description of the scales is also included.

### Four-year Form A: 12 scales

- Academic Advising Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Life
- Campus Support Services
- Concern for the Individual
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
- Safety and Security
- Service Excellence
- Student Centeredness
- *Items not on a scale: 24 and 49*

### Four-year Form B: 9 scales

- Academic Advising Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Life
- Campus Support Services
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Safety and Security
- Student Centeredness

## Two-year Community College Form A: 12 scales

- Academic Advising and Counseling Effectiveness
- Academic Services
- Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Support Services
- Concern for the Individual
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
- Safety and Security
- Service Excellence
- Student Centeredness
- *Items not on a scale: 6, 37, and 48*

## Two-year Community College Form B: 8 scales

- Academic Advising and Counseling Effectiveness
- Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Services
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Safety and Security
- Student Centeredness

## Description of Scales

**Academic Advising (and Counseling) Effectiveness:** Assesses the comprehensiveness of your academic advising program. Academic advisors (and counselors) are evaluated on the basis of their knowledge, competence, and personal concern for student success, as well as on their approachability.

**Academic Services:** Assesses services students utilize to achieve their academic goals. These services include the library, computer labs, and tutoring services.

**Campus Climate:** Assesses the extent to which your institution provides experiences that promote a sense of campus pride and feelings of belonging. This scale also assesses the effectiveness of your institution's channels of communication for students.

**Campus Life:** Assesses the effectiveness of student life programs offered by your institution, covering issues ranging from student activities to residence life. This scale also assesses campus policies and procedures to determine perceptions of students' rights and responsibilities.

**Campus Services:** (similar to Academic Services) Assesses services students utilize to achieve their academic goals. These services include the library, computer labs, tutoring, and study areas.

**Campus Support Services:** Assesses the quality of your support programs and services that students utilize to make their educational experiences more meaningful and productive. This scale covers a variety of areas.

**Concern for the Individual:** Assesses your institution's commitment to treating each student as an individual. Those groups who frequently deal with students on a personal level (e.g. faculty, advisors, etc.) are included in this assessment.

**Instructional Effectiveness:** Assesses the academic experience, the curriculum, and the campus's overriding commitment to academic excellence. This comprehensive scale covers areas such as the effectiveness of your faculty in and out of the classroom, the content of the courses, and sufficient course offerings.

**Recruitment (or Admissions) and Financial Aid Effectiveness:** Assesses your institution's ability to enroll students in an effective manner. This scale covers issues such as the competence and knowledge of admissions counselors, as well as the effectiveness and availability of financial aid programs.

**Registration Effectiveness:** Assesses issues associated with registration and billing. This scale also measures your institution's commitment to making this process as smooth and effective as possible.

**Responsiveness to Diverse Populations:** Assesses your institution's commitment to specific groups of students enrolled at your institution, e.g., under-represented populations; students with disabilities; commuters; part-time students; and older, returning learners. This scale only captures an agreement score.

**Safety and Security:** Assesses your institution's responsiveness to students' personal safety and security on your campus. This scale measures the effectiveness of both security personnel and campus facilities.

**Service Excellence:** Assesses the perceived attitude of your staff, especially front-line staff, toward students. This scale pinpoints the areas of your campus where quality service and personal concern for students are rated most and least favorably.

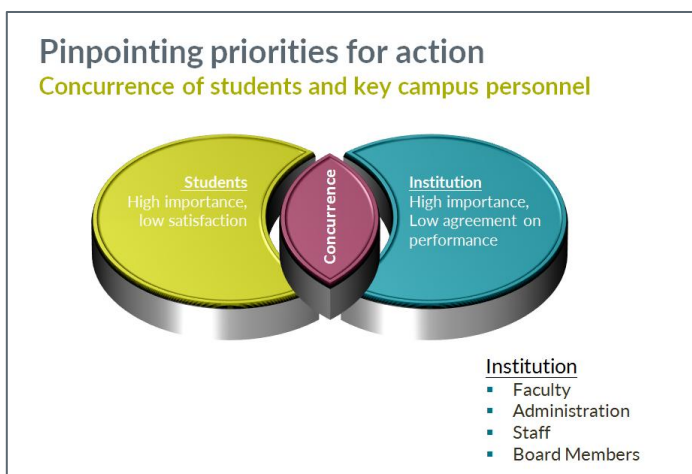
**Student Centeredness:** Assesses your campus's efforts to convey to students that they are important to your institution. This scale measures the extent to which students feel welcome and valued.

The items that contribute to each scale can be viewed within your results. Use the filter in the upper left on the Item Report segment to see the items within each scale.

## Interpreting your IPS results

General guidelines for reviewing and interpreting your results are provided in the General Interpretive Guide. This section provides additional suggestions for reviewing and interpreting the combination of the SSI and IPS data.

The power of the IPS is in comparing the perceptions of the faculty, administration, and staff with the perceptions of your students. You want to be able to identify areas that are perceived similarly and be prepared with an understanding of the areas that may be perceived differently on campus. The following Venn diagram further illustrates this concept:



### The areas of greatest institutional strength

- Items of highest importance/highest satisfaction (student satisfaction data)
- Items of highest importance/highest agreement (campus personnel data)
- Intersect of A & B = areas of greatest strength

### The areas of highest institutional priority

- Items of highest importance/lowest satisfaction (student satisfaction data)
- Items of highest importance/lowest agreement (campus personnel data)
- Intersect of A & B = areas of highest priority

## An Approach to Analyzing the Data

One approach to analyzing the SSI and IPS results is to compare the lists of strengths and challenges provided in each data set's Strategic Planning Overview. You will want to identify the following items which are:

- Strengths for both students and campus personnel:** These items are areas everyone can celebrate. They have the full support of your entire campus and provide extra strong opportunities for positive feedback and marketing activities.
- Challenges for both students and campus personnel:** The institution has the green light to move forward with initiatives in these areas because the entire campus is on board with identifying them as areas that require improvement. There is support from all segments of the campus population to make changes.
- Strengths for students but challenges for campus personnel:** These areas provide an opportunity to share with your campus personnel that they are actually performing well based on the perceptions of the students. An institution may want to explore further why campus personnel believe the areas are challenges, but not much time or effort should be spent in these areas since students already feel it is a strength for the campus.
- Challenges for students but strengths for campus personnel:** These are another area that provide an opportunity for dialogue since they are viewed differently by campus constituencies. The emphasis should be on the fact students see the area as a challenge and additional efforts



need to be made to improve the experience for students. More effort will need to be made to build support in this area since campus personnel currently view it as a strength.

5. **Strengths or challenges for one group but not for the other:** These areas present opportunities for further discussion and education about why certain areas are more valued by one group than the other, or why satisfaction levels may be higher or lower in one segment than the other. Areas that are viewed as challenges by campus personnel, but not by students should be explored to determine if improvements need to be made on behalf of faculty, administration, and staff. However, the challenges identified by students should be the primary focus of significant resource allocation so that the institution maintains a student-centered focus.

## The Combination Report

With the administration of the IPS, a Combination Report is included automatically in your RNL Client Portal. Please review the guidelines in the SPS Interpretive Guide for how to read the results in the Combo Report to best understand how to utilize your student and campus personnel data sets together.

## The Inventory Development

The Institutional Priorities Survey was modeled on the Student Satisfaction Inventory. The text of the items was modified to be appropriate for campus personnel responses. The survey length in the Form A version was reduced from the SSI in order to focus on items that are typically most important to institutions. The items on Form B directly match up with all items on Form B of the SSI.

## Reliability and Validity

The reliability of the IPS is high. Cronbach's coefficient alpha, which measures internal consistency, was .97 for the importance scores and .94 for the agreement scores. The three-week test-retest reliability estimate of mean importance and agreement scores is .74 and .80 respectively.

The validity of the IPS is strong. It was assessed by correlating respondents' scores on the IPS with their interview responses on a qualitative protocol reflecting the content of the instrument. The interviews with faculty, staff, and administrators were conducted and scored two weeks in advance of the written survey. The mean cross-method validity coefficients were .69 for importance scores and .60 for agreement scores and the individual scale correlations between the interview responses and the survey responses ranged from .93 to .49 for the importance scales and from .86 to .44 for the agreement scales. Ten of the 11 scale correlations were significant at the .05 level, thus indicating that the instrument adequately reflects the construct it was designed to measure.

## Contact us

For general questions about reviewing your results or to order materials for a future administration, please contact:

- Shannon Cook, Executive Consultant, Student Success Solutions,  
[Shannon.Cook@RuffaloNL.com](mailto:Shannon.Cook@RuffaloNL.com)

To schedule an in-depth report discussion at **no charge** or to explore opportunities to have a consultant come to campus to present your results (additional fees apply), please contact:

- Julie Bryant, Vice President for Student Success, [Julie.Bryant@RuffaloNL.com](mailto:Julie.Bryant@RuffaloNL.com)

For questions regarding the raw data, or any additional assistance, please contact:

- [StudentSuccessTech@RuffaloNL.com](mailto:StudentSuccessTech@RuffaloNL.com)

## For More Information:

Ruffalo Noel Levitz.

Phone: 800-876-1117

Email: [ContactUs@RuffaloNL.com](mailto:ContactUs@RuffaloNL.com)

Website: [www.RuffaloNL.com](http://www.RuffaloNL.com)

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