

# First-Year Satisfaction

2013 Your First College Year Survey

In spring 2013, we asked first-year students at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) to participate in the *Your First College Year* survey. The survey was administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA in conjunction with the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. Due to low response rates, the results should be interpreted with caution.<sup>1</sup> This report provides information about student satisfaction with their college experience.



## Satisfaction Constructs

The survey instrument includes 16 constructs based on rigorous statistical methods. The constructs are designed to capture the experiences and outcomes that institutions are often interested in but find challenging to measure because of their complex and multifaceted nature. Constructs are particularly helpful in examining trends over time and making comparisons to other institutions. Construct scores should not be converted into percentages or compared to other constructs.

## Overall Satisfaction

The overall satisfaction construct is a unified measure of students' satisfaction with the college experience. Since 2011, CWRU's score on the overall satisfaction construct has not changed significantly (49 in 2011 vs. 48 in 2013). Additionally, CWRU's construct score for 2012-13 was not significantly different from a comparison group of private universities (CWRU: 47 vs. private institutions: 49).<sup>2</sup> The results for the items which make up the construct are provided below.

- ❖ 82% of 2012-13 first-year students were satisfied with their overall academic experience
- ❖ 82% said they would choose to enroll at CWRU if they could make their college choice over
- ❖ 80% were satisfied with the overall quality of instruction
- ❖ 76% were satisfied with their overall college experience

## Satisfaction with Coursework

The satisfaction with coursework construct measures the extent to which students see their coursework as relevant, useful, and applicable to their academic success and future plans. Since 2011, CWRU's score has not changed significantly (47 in 2011 vs. 46 in 2013) and CWRU's score for 2012-13 was not significantly different from the score for the private university comparison group (CWRU: 46 vs. private institutions: 47). The results for the items which make up the construct are provided below.

- ❖ 79% were satisfied with the general education and core curriculum
- ❖ 64% were satisfied with the relevance of coursework to their future career plans

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<sup>1</sup> Of the 1,336 students who received the survey, 27% (n=361) answered at least 50% of the questions. Compared to their peers, women, Asian/White, U.S. citizens, and students in non-management majors responded to the survey at significantly higher rates.

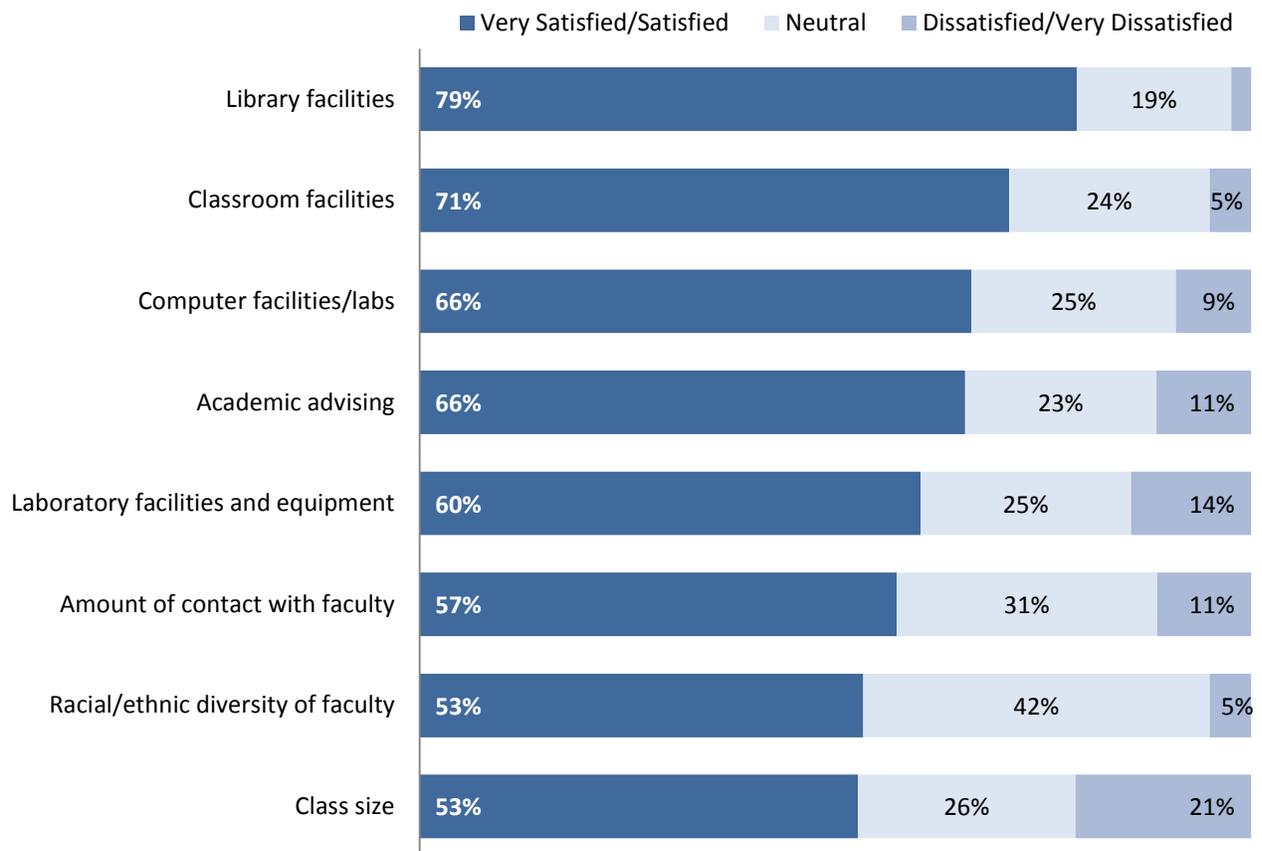
<sup>2</sup> The private university comparison group included Azusa Pacific University, Fordham University, Pepperdine University, University of the Pacific, Wake Forest University, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

- ❖ 58% were satisfied with first-year programs (e.g., first-year seminar, learning community, linked courses)
- ❖ 51% were satisfied with the relevance of coursework to their everyday life

### Satisfaction with Academic Support and Courses

There were several items on the survey related to student satisfaction which were not included in the constructs. In terms of academics, students were most satisfied with the library and classroom facilities. They were least satisfied with class size and the racial/ethnic diversity of faculty (figure 1).

**Figure 1. Satisfaction with Academic Support and Courses**

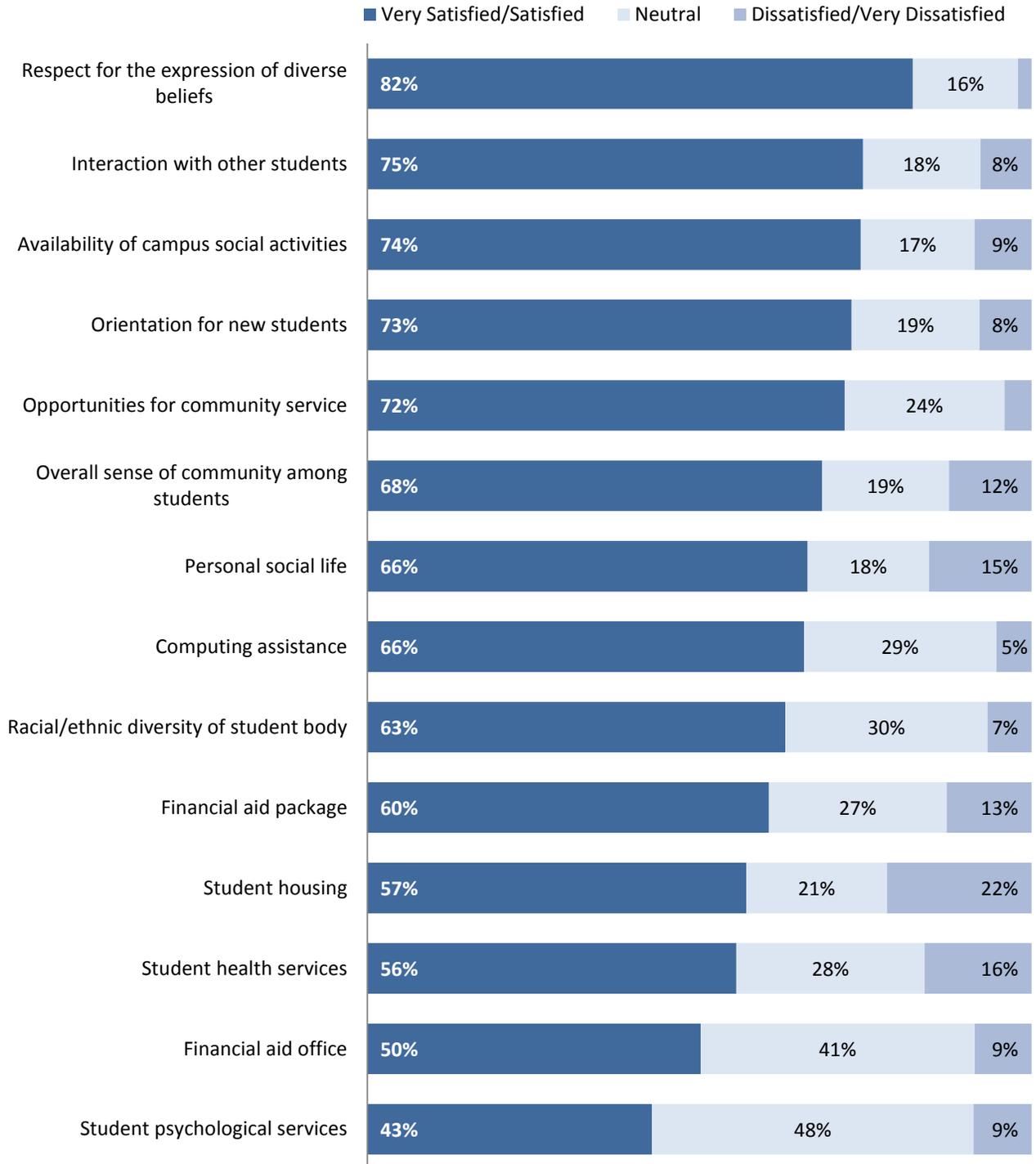


### Satisfaction with Services and Community

In terms of satisfaction with services and the CWRU community, the vast majority of students were satisfied with (figure 2):

- ❖ Respect for the expression of diverse beliefs
- ❖ Interaction with other students
- ❖ Availability of campus social activities
- ❖ Orientation for new students
- ❖ Opportunities for community service
- ❖ Overall sense of community

**Figure 2. Satisfaction with Services and Community**



**Additional Information**

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