

# Satisfaction

## 2014 College Senior Survey

In spring 2014, we asked graduating seniors at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) to participate in the *College Senior Survey*. The survey was administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) in conjunction with the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. It is a follow-up to *The Freshman Survey* (TFS) which was administered to this cohort in fall of 2010. Of 1,217<sup>1</sup> potential participants, 23% (n=284)<sup>2</sup> submitted responses. Their results are compared to students from a comparison group of universities<sup>3</sup>. Additionally, 154 students completed both the TFS and CSS, allowing us to make comparisons over time<sup>4</sup>. This report provides information about students' satisfaction with their experiences on campus.



### Measures

The results include constructs derived from multiple items on the survey instrument. 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. The construct scores detailed in this report are more than a basic summation of individual items. Rather, they are computed using Item Response Theory (IRT)<sup>5</sup> and have been scaled such that the population means equal 50. *Construct scores should not be converted into percentages or compared to other constructs.*

In addition to the constructs, additional individual items are highlighted in the report. The full distribution for constructs and individual items is available on the IR website at: <https://www.case.edu/ir/srvyresults/>. All significant differences also include a measure of effect size,

<sup>1</sup> Population n=983: Women=399 (41%), Men=584 (59%); Caucasian=515 (52%), Asian=189 (19%), Black=41 (4%), Hispanic=33 (3%), Other=29 (3%), Unknown=106 (11%), International=70 (7%)

<sup>2</sup> Sample n=326: Women=166 (51%), Men=160 (49%); Caucasian=184 (56%), Asian=53 (16%), Black=10 (3%), Hispanic=8 (3%), Other=11 (3%), Unknown=42 (13%); International=17 (5%)

<sup>3</sup> Pepperdine University, Northeastern University, Fordham University, Texas Christian University and Biola University

<sup>4</sup> Longitudinal comparisons examine change in students who completed both TFS and CSS (includes data from 33 non-graduating seniors).

<sup>5</sup> Item Response Theory (IRT) uses response patterns to derive construct score estimates while simultaneously giving greater weight in the estimation process to survey items that tap into the construct more directly. This results in more accurate construct scores.

Cohen's *d*. Effect size allows us to estimate the size of the differences between two means<sup>6</sup>. For ease of reference, bulleted items which demonstrate significant differences are italicized.

## Overall Satisfaction

The *Overall Satisfaction* construct is a unified measure of students' satisfaction with the college experience. Compared to the other institutions, CWRU students were moderately less satisfied with their experiences; ( $M=48, SD=8.90$ ) vs. ( $M=51, SD=8.10$ ),  $d=-0.41, p<.001$ . Below is a breakdown of individual items that made up the overall satisfaction score:

- *Overall college experience: 32% vs. 43% very satisfied; ( $M=3.95, SD=0.98$ ) vs. ( $M=4.24, SD=0.83$ );  $d=-0.35, p<.001$*
- *If you could make your college choice over, would still choose to enroll at your current college: 37% vs. 52% definitely yes; ( $M=3.11, SD=0.86$ ) vs. ( $M=3.35, SD=0.78$ );  $d=-0.31, p<.001$*
- *Overall quality of instruction: 19% vs. 33% very satisfied; ( $M=3.77, SD=0.95$ ) vs. ( $M=4.09, SD=0.81$ ),  $d=-0.40, p<.001$*

## Satisfaction with Academic Support and Courses

CWRU students were slightly to moderately less satisfied with the following items than students at the comparison institutions:

- *Amount of contact with faculty: 36% vs. 42% very satisfied; ( $M=3.98, SD=1.00$ ) vs. ( $M=4.19, SD=0.85$ );  $d=-0.25, p<.001$*
- *Academic advising: 17% vs. 21% very satisfied; ( $M=3.17, SD=1.23$ ) vs. ( $M=3.56, SD=1.11$ );  $d=-0.35, p<.001$ .*
- *Class size: 35% vs. 43% very satisfied; ( $M=4.14, SD=0.78$ ) vs. ( $M=4.28, SD=0.74$ ),  $d=-0.19, p<.01$*
- *Ability to find faculty or staff mentor: 28% vs. 43% very satisfied; ( $M=3.74, SD=1.07$ ) vs. ( $M=3.89, SD=0.96$ );  $d=-0.16, p<.05$*

There was no meaningful difference in satisfaction ratings for tutoring or other academic assistance; 23% vs. 18%; ( $M=3.75, SD=0.90$ ) vs. ( $M=3.68, SD=0.86$ ). There was also no meaningful difference between CWRU and the comparison group in terms of the frequency they meet with an advisor/counselor about their career plans; 25% vs. 24% frequently; ( $M=2.11, SD=0.61$ ) vs. ( $M=2.10, SD=0.61$ ).

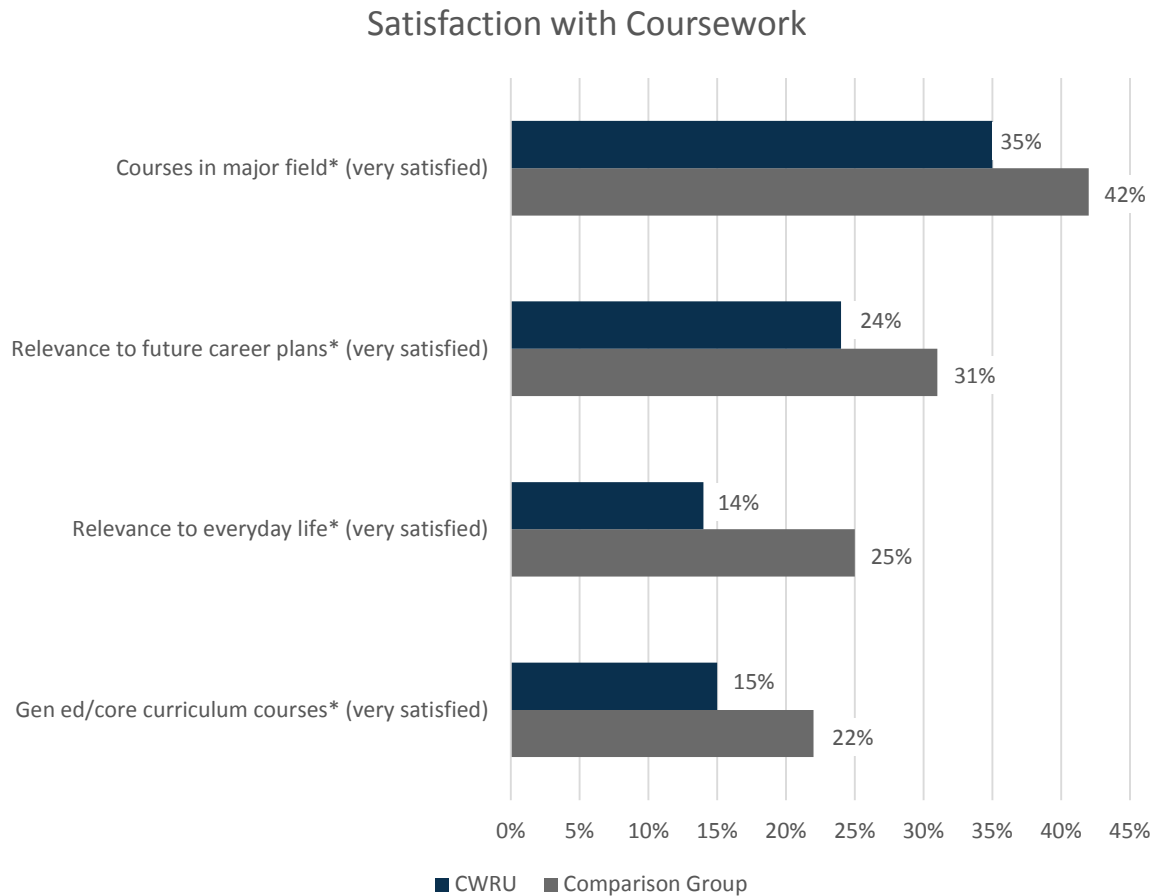
## Satisfaction with Coursework

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. CWRU students were moderately less satisfied with their coursework than students in the comparison group; ( $M=47, SD=10.20$ )

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<sup>6</sup> The effect size is the size of the difference between two means. Cohen's *d* values were interpreted according to the criteria used by the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research: small ~ .1, medium ~ .3, large ~ .5, very large ~ .7. These benchmark criteria were applied unilaterally to both constructs and individual items for simplicity.

vs. ( $M=50, SD=9.68$ );  $d=-0.35, p<.001$ . The following graph illustrates a breakdown of the satisfaction with coursework construct by item:



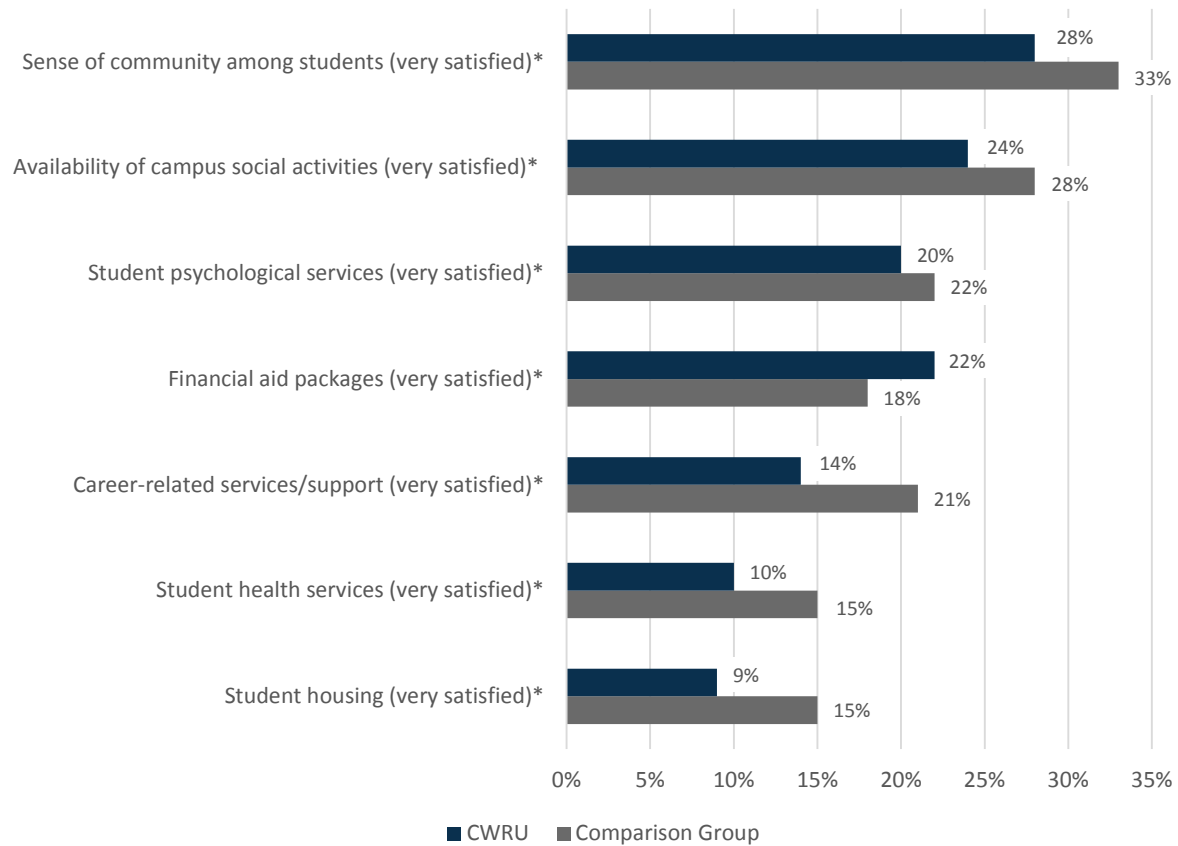
\*Slight to moderate differences: courses in major field ( $d=-0.22$ ), relevance to future career plans ( $d=-0.27$ ), relevance to everyday life ( $d=-0.42$ ), gen ed/core curriculum courses ( $d=-0.19$ )

In addition to the construct items described above, CWRU students also reported that they were slightly more bored in class (39% vs. 26%); ( $M=2.35, SD=0.55$ ) vs. ( $M=2.22, SD=0.51$ );  $d=0.25, p<.001$ . CWRU students were also slightly more likely to spend more than 20 hours per week on studying/homework than the comparison group (20% vs. 12%); ( $M=5.82, SD=1.52$ ) vs. ( $M=5.47, SD=1.43$ );  $d=0.24, p<.001$ .

### Satisfaction with Services and Community

As described in the graph below, CWRU students were slightly to moderately less satisfied with most of the following items than students at the comparison institutions:

## Satisfaction with Services and Community



\*Slight to moderate differences: community ( $d=-0.26$ ), social activities ( $d=-0.17$ ), psychological services ( $d=-0.24$ ), financial aid ( $d=0.15$ ), career-related services/support ( $d=-0.18$ ), health services ( $d=-0.35$ ), housing ( $d=-0.36$ )

There were no meaningful differences on the following items:

- Laboratory facilities and equipment: 17% vs. 16% very satisfied; ( $M=3.62$ ,  $SD=0.97$ ) vs. ( $M=3.58$ ,  $SD=0.94$ ); No meaningful difference
- Library facilities: 28% vs. 31% very satisfied; ( $M=3.99$ ,  $SD=0.84$ ) vs. ( $M=3.99$ ,  $SD=0.91$ ); No meaningful difference
- Computing assistance: 23% vs. 18% very satisfied; ( $M=3.79$ ,  $SD=0.91$ ) vs. ( $M=3.72$ ,  $SD=0.85$ ); No meaningful difference

However, CWRU scored slightly lower on the following item:

- *I feel valued at this institution*: 30% vs. 35% strongly agree; ( $M=3.00$ ,  $SD=0.87$ ) vs. ( $M=3.15$ ,  $SD=0.76$ );  $d=-0.20$ ,  $p<.01$

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