

AUTHOR MacFarland, Thomas W.  
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ABSTRACT

This study examined student satisfaction among a sample of on-campus and off-campus students of the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education at Nova Southeastern University. A total of 1,039 students responded to a survey that focused on demographic and background information, academic programs, and student services. The study found that 80 percent of on-campus students were enrolled in either a master's or specialist program, while nearly two-thirds of all off-campus students were enrolled in doctoral programs. Overall quality of the academic program received a slightly higher rating from off-campus students than from on-campus students, with off-campus respondents providing higher mean ratings than their on-campus counterparts for approximately two-thirds of all survey statements. On-campus respondents indicated higher levels of satisfaction than off-campus students for statements related to the university's technology-based information resource infrastructure. Over 20 percent of all respondents indicated that they would not have attended a college or university if they had not attended NSU. A copy of the survey questionnaire is appended. (Contains 15 references.) (MDM)

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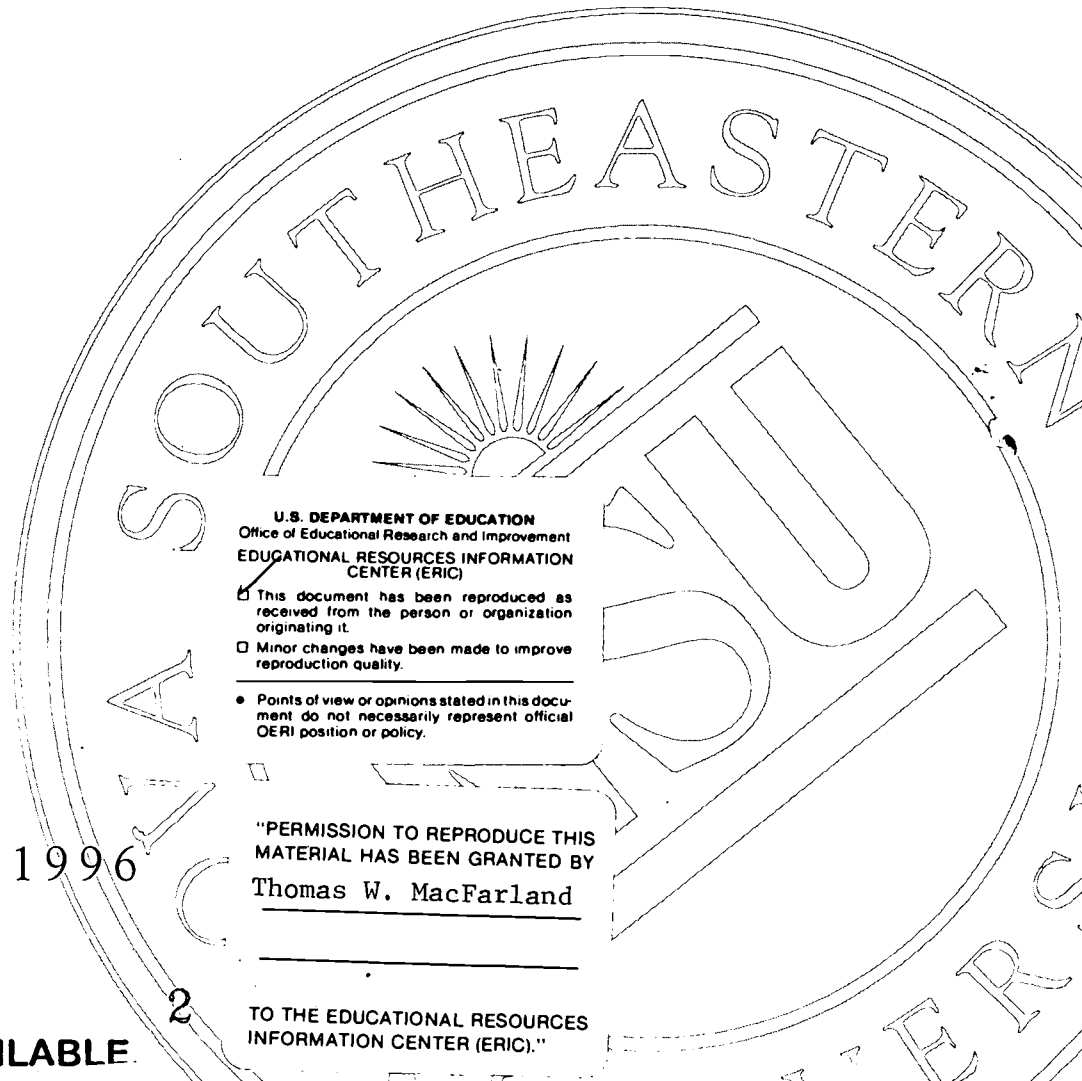
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# STUDENTS IN THE ABRAHAM S. FISCHLER CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION RESPOND TO A SATISFACTION SURVEY: A COMPARISON BETWEEN ON-CAMPUS STUDENTS AND OFF-CAMPUS STUDENTS

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

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**STUDENTS IN THE ABRAHAM S. FISCHLER CENTER FOR THE  
ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION RESPOND TO A  
SATISFACTION SURVEY: A COMPARISON  
BETWEEN ON-CAMPUS STUDENTS  
AND OFF-CAMPUS STUDENTS**

**Thomas W. MacFarland**

**Senior Research Associate**

**Nova Southeastern University  
Research and Planning**

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**Research and Planning  
Report 96-12**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was prepared to assess levels of satisfaction with program and services for students in the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education who were enrolled during Winter Term 1996. Previous activities had focused on a broad assessment of students from all five academic centers with off-campus offerings (N = 12,499). Site personnel returned 1,039 useable surveys to Research and Planning (On-campus N = 707, Off-campus N = 322, and Unidentified Place of Attendance N = 10) from the population of 4,918 Center for the Advancement of Education students.

Attention was directed to differences between levels of satisfaction from students who attended the majority of their classes on the University's Davie Campus and the immediate Broward County area (on-campus students) and their counterparts who attended the majority of their classes at other locations (off-campus students). Although these comparisons serve as a useful differentiation between on-campus students and off-campus students, it should be recalled that there are multiple sources of data in the University's *Master Plan* (1995) and *Institutional Self-Study Report* (1996) that provide additional information on the practice and efficacy of distance education at the University.

Survey statements were worded using language directly from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' *Criteria for Accreditation* (1996). All statements received a mean rating of 3.0 or greater (1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied), indicating positive satisfaction with academic program and student services. For approximately two-thirds of all survey statements, off-campus students provided higher mean ratings than on-campus students.

Comparison of results between on-campus students and off-campus students confirmed the assumption that the University needed to initiate a series of activities to increase access to the University's technology-based information resource infrastructure for off-campus students. Along with the planned University-wide expenditure of \$1.5 million for computing equipment in Fiscal Year 1996 - 1997, a brief listing of proactive measures that are currently in place that should raise student satisfaction with the information infrastructure to even higher levels was identified.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Identification of the Population

- This study represented a broad assessment of students in Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education, including students attending class in Florida, Georgia, Missouri, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Delaware, and Canada.
- Approximately 80 percent of all on-campus respondents were enrolled in either a master's or specialist program. In contrast, nearly two-thirds of all off-campus respondents were enrolled in a doctoral program.

### Purpose of This Report

- Along with a request for demographic and marketing information, respondents were queried on their level of satisfaction with issues linked to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' *Criteria for Accreditation* (1996).
- All statements received a rating of 3.0 or greater (1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied), indicating positive satisfaction with academic program and student services.
- The summative statement **Overall quality of this academic program** received a higher rating from off-campus respondents (Mean = 4.3) than their on-campus counterparts (Mean = 4.0).

### Experience with Technology-Based Instructional Media

Approximately 40 percent of all off-campus respondents and 30 percent of all on-campus respondents indicated experience with electronic mail as a technology-based instructional medium.

## Reasons for Selecting the University

- For on-campus respondents, the three leading selections were:
  - Type of Programs Available . . . . . 54.3 percent
  - Convenience . . . . . 53.5 percent
  - Location . . . . . 46.0 percent
- For off-campus respondents, the three leading selections were:
  - Convenience . . . . . 65.5 percent
  - Type of Programs Available . . . . . 61.5 percent
  - Location . . . . . 50.9 percent
- Over 20 percent of all on-campus respondents and off-campus respondents did not select attendance at a college or university as an option had they not attended Nova Southeastern University.

## Satisfaction with Program and Services

- Off-campus respondents provided higher mean ratings than their on-campus counterparts for approximately two-thirds of all survey statements, including statements related to: instructional methods, delivery system, competency of the faculty, quality of the learning environment, opportunity for intellectual growth, faculty and student interaction, exposure to research scholars, and opportunity for peer interaction.
- On-campus respondents indicated higher levels of satisfaction than off-campus students for statements related to the University's technology-based information resource infrastructure. Processes that are currently in place to increase off-campus access to this information infrastructure were identified.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background

The University initially offered off-campus degree programs in 1972, when the field-based Ed.D. Program in Educational Leadership and the field-based Ed.D. Program for Community College Faculty and Administrators were first implemented. These and other off-campus degree programs were integral degree offerings when the University received reaffirmation of accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1975 and 1985 (*Nova Southeastern University Fact Book*; 1996, p. 9-11). The University currently offers off-campus programs at 79 sites in Florida, 66 sites in 21 other states in the United States, and 13 sites in five foreign nations (*Off-Campus Program Directory*, 1996).

As part of the current process for reaffirmation of accreditation, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools assembled a Visiting Team at the University in February 1996. This Visiting Team received orientation from University administrators on a variety of issues, including orientation on current distance education activities at the University. Members of this Visiting Team met with students, faculty, and staff at selected off-campus sites throughout Winter Term 1996. These on-site visits were planned to provide an advance framework for the full Visiting Team's presence at the University in October 1996.

### Purpose of This Study

Extending the evaluations contained in annual reports, such as *Quality Improvement Plans, Administrative and Educational Support Services: 1994-95* (1995) and *Status Report on Institutional Effectiveness: 1994 - 1995* (1995), Research and Planning in cooperation with those centers most involved with distance education prepared a plan (Memorandum from Tom MacFarland to John Losak; September 22, 1995) to survey both students and graduates as reflected in the following reports:

- Research and Planning Report 96-02; *Graduates of Nova Southeastern University's Undergraduate Programs Tell Us About Their Undergraduate Experience.*
- Research and Planning Report 96-03; *Place of Class Attendance at Nova Southeastern University: Calendar Years 1990 to 1994.*

- Research and Planning Report 96-05; *Graduates of the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education Reflect on Their Experience With Nova Southeastern University.*
- Research and Planning Report 96-06; *Graduates of the School of Business and Entrepreneurship Reflect Upon Their Academic Experiences.*
- Research and Planning Report 96-07; *Graduates of the School of Computer and Information Sciences Offer Judgment on Their Experience With Nova Southeastern University.*
- Research and Planning Report 96-08; *South Florida vs. Other Locations: Comparing Student Responses to a Satisfaction Survey.*

Although these reports provide useful analyses, it should be recalled that there are multiple sources of data in the University's *Master Plan* (1995) and *Institutional Self-Study Report* (1996) that provide additional information on the practice and efficacy of distance education at the University.

## METHODOLOGY

### Survey Development

Survey development was described in full detail in *South Florida vs. Other Locations: Comparing Student Responses to a Satisfaction Survey* (1996). Most demographic selections and marketing-type statements in the survey (Appendix) are specific to the University and these selections were tested in prior survey activities initiated by Research and Planning. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' *Criteria for Accreditation* (1996) and *Guidelines for Planning Distance Learning Activities* (1992) served as major references for the development of most Likert-type survey statements.

### Sampling

#### Population and Invited Sample

The population for the entire survey process consisted of all Winter Term 1996 students enrolled in the five academic centers with distance education programs (N = 12,499; Research and Planning *Weekly Enrollment Report*, April 29, 1996). With specific reference to the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education (N = 4,918; Research

and Planning *Weekly Enrollment Report*, April 29, 1996), site administrators at the following locations were instructed to distribute the survey instrument to students sometime between March 25 to April 25, 1996, depending on local cluster meeting dates:

- Florida
  - Orlando
    - Graduate Teacher Education Program (M.S. and Ed.S.) . . . . . N = 175
  - Tampa
    - Graduate Teacher Education Program (M.S. and Ed.S.) . . . . . N = 175
- Other States
  - Atlanta, Georgia
    - Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 29
  - Kansas City, Missouri
    - Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 7
  - Northern Virginia
    - Child and Youth Studies (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 21
  - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
    - Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 39
  - Phoenix, Arizona
    - Higher Education (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 32
  - Richmond, Virginia
    - Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 26
    - Higher Education (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 38
  - Williamsport, Pennsylvania
    - Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 9

- Wilmington, Delaware
  - Child and Youth Studies (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 17
  - Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 18
- International
  - Canada (Vancouver)
    - Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) . . . . . N = 20
- TOTAL . . . . . N = 606

The invited sample was expanded in May 1996 to include all students in the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education attending class, during Winter Term 1996, either at the University's Davie Campus or at local clusters in Broward County (N = 1,325).

Responding Sample

Site personnel in the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education returned 1,039 useable surveys to Research and Planning:

- On-campus . . . . . N = 707
- Off-campus . . . . . N = 322
- Unidentified . . . . . N = 10

A limitation to this study was that it is not possible to accurately determine the percentage of survey return. During survey distribution and return, there were cases where the total number of surveys distributed to students and the completed number of surveys in each packet were not accurately recorded. Although it is not possible to offer a calculation of return percentage, it is reasonable to think that the return percentage is high, since survey completion was an in-class activity, administered by instructors and site personnel.

## RESULTS

### Demographic Composition of the Responding Sample

Tables 1 to 4 provide demographic information about the responding sample. In regard to contrasts between on-campus students and off-campus students, key findings include the following observations:

- Approximately 80 percent of all on-campus respondents were enrolled in either a master's or specialist program, while nearly two-thirds of all off-campus respondents were enrolled in a doctoral program.
- Over 75 percent of all on-campus respondents were female. Less than 60 percent of all off-campus respondents were female. University-wide, approximately 60 percent of all enrollees are female.
- Approximately 12 percent of all on-campus respondents indicated Hispanic ethnicity. In contrast, only four percent of all off-campus respondents indicated Hispanic ethnicity.
- The invited sample was expanded in May 1996 to include all students in the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education attending class during Winter Term 1996, either at the University's Davie Campus or at a local cluster in Broward County. Accordingly, nearly 63 percent of all respondents were classified as on-campus students.

### Experience with Technology-Based Instructional Media

The experience of survey respondents with technology-based instructional media is presented in Table 5. The use of electronic mail as an instructional medium was identified by over 40 percent of all off-campus respondents. In contrast, less than 30 percent of all on-campus respondents indicated experience with electronic mail.

### Satisfaction With the University

Survey respondents were also presented with statements that focused on satisfaction with the University. Table 6 summarizes responses to the statement **Why did you decide to attend**

NSU? Differences in rank order and frequency of response between on-campus respondents and off-campus respondents were quite evident:

- For on-campus respondents, the three leading selections were:
  - Type of Programs Available . . . . . 54.3 percent
  - Convenience . . . . . 53.5 percent
  - Location . . . . . 46.0 percent
- For off-campus respondents, the three leading selections were:
  - Convenience . . . . . 65.5 percent
  - Type of Programs Available . . . . . 61.5 percent
  - Location . . . . . 50.9 percent

Survey respondents were also asked to identify alternates if they had not attended the University. Table 7 contrasts on-campus respondents and off-campus respondents. For on-campus respondents, over 20 percent did not select attendance at a college or university as an option had they not attended Nova Southeastern University. For off-campus respondents, over 25 percent did not select attendance at a college or university as an option had they not attended Nova Southeastern University.

Academic Programs and Student Services

The survey included statements that were directly based on accreditation criteria found in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools' *Criteria for Accreditation* (1996). Descriptive statistics for these statements are presented in Table 8, comparing on-campus respondents and their off-campus counterparts. All statements received a rating of greater than 3.0 (1 = Very Dissatisfied to 5 = Very Satisfied), indicating positive satisfaction with academic programs and student services. The highest rating (Mean = 4.5) was offered by off-campus respondents for **Opportunity for intellectual growth**. For approximately two-thirds of all Likert-statements, off-campus respondents offered higher mean ratings than their on-campus counterparts.



**Table 1**  
**Degree Level**

<b>DEGREE LEVEL</b>	<b>ON-CAMPUS</b>		<b>OFF-CAMPUS</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Master's . . . . .	495	70.0	79	24.5
Specialist . . . . .	57	8.1	21	6.5
Doctoral . . . . .	120	17.0	206	64.0
Unidentified . . . . .	35	4.9	16	4.9
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>707</b>		<b>322</b>	

**Table 2**  
**Gender**

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>ON-CAMPUS</b>		<b>OFF-CAMPUS</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Female . . . . .	540	76.4	187	58.1
Male . . . . .	161	22.8	131	40.7
Unidentified . . . . .	6	0.8	4	1.2
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>707</b>		<b>322</b>	

**Table 3**  
**Ethnicity**

ETHNICITY	ON-CAMPUS		OFF-CAMPUS	
	N	%	N	%
African-American . . . . .	173	24.5	72	22.4
American Indian or Alaskan Native . . . . .	2	0.3	2	0.6
Asian or Pacific Islander . . . . .	1	0.1	---	---
Hispanic . . . . .	81	11.5	14	4.3
White . . . . .	411	58.1	223	69.3
Other . . . . .	29	4.1	5	1.6
Unidentified . . . . .	10	1.4	6	1.9
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>707</b>		<b>322</b>	

**Table 4**  
**Majority Place of Class Attendance**

	N	%
Davie Campus or East Campus . . . . .	650	62.6
Cluster Location in Broward, Dade, Monroe, or Palm Beach County . . . . .	57	5.5
Cluster Location in Another Florida County . . . . .	78	7.5
Cluster Location in Another State . . . . .	181	17.4
Cluster Location in Another Country . . . . .	17	1.6
Other . . . . .	46	4.4
Missing . . . . .	10	1.0
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>1039</b>	

**Table 5**

**Experience with Technology-Based Instructional Media**

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>ON-CAMPUS</b>		<b>OFF-CAMPUS</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Audiobridge . . . . .	147	20.8	26	8.1
Compressed Video . . . . .	93	13.2	15	4.7
Electronic Mail . . . . .	204	28.9	137	42.5
Electronic Classroom . . . . .	59	8.3	33	10.2
Other . . . . .	31	4.4	28	8.7

**Table 6**

**Frequency of Response to Reasons for Attending Nova Southeastern University**

<b>REASONS FOR ATTENDING NSU</b>	<b>ON-CAMPUS</b>		<b>OFF-CAMPUS</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Academic Reputation . . . . .	205	29.0	122	37.9
Admissions Standards . . . . .	186	26.3	67	20.8
Advice of Counselors and Teachers . . . . .	91	12.9	35	10.9
Availability of Scholarships or Financial Aid . . . . .	67	9.5	33	10.2
Convenience . . . . .	378	53.5	211	65.5
Cost . . . . .	37	5.2	18	5.6
Location . . . . .	325	46.0	164	50.9
Small Class Size . . . . .	171	24.2	85	26.4
Social Atmosphere . . . . .	47	6.6	35	10.9
Type of Programs Available . . . . .	384	54.3	198	61.5
Other . . . . .	62	8.8	43	13.4

**Table 7**

**Frequency of Response to What Survey Respondents Would Have Done  
if They had not Attended Nova Southeastern University**

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>ON-CAMPUS</b>		<b>OFF-CAMPUS</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Attended another private college or university in South Florida . . . . .	182	25.7	13	4.0
Attended another private college or university in Florida but not in South Florida . . . . .	5	0.7	11	3.4
Attended a private college or university in another state	22	3.1	41	12.7
Attended a state college or university in South Florida	276	39.0	34	10.6
Attended state college or university in Florida, but not in South Florida . . . . .	26	3.7	37	11.5
Attended a state college or university in another state	38	5.4	101	31.4
Not attended a college or university . . . . .	36	5.1	40	12.4
Other . . . . .	14	2.0	13	4.0
Unidentified . . . . .	108	15.3	32	9.9
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>707</b>		<b>322</b>	

**Table 8**

**Ratings of Selected Statements Related to Academic Programs and Student Services:**

STATEMENT	ON-CAMPUS			OFF-CAMPUS		
	N	MEAN	SD	N	MEAN	SD
Clarity of written admission policies . . .	678	4.1	0.9	318	4.2	0.8
Clarity of written policy on transfer of credit from other institutions . . . . .	544	3.9	1.0	241	4.0	1.0
Clarity of written completion requirements	658	4.1	0.9	317	4.2	0.9
Clarity of written curricular offerings, as identified in program catalog . . . . .	671	4.1	0.9	316	4.2	0.8
Program orientation . . . . .	619	3.8	1.0	322	4.0	0.9
Length of the academic program . . . . .	687	4.1	1.0	315	4.3	0.8
Length of the individual courses . . . . .	684	4.2	0.8	315	4.3	0.8
Instructional methods . . . . .	687	4.0	0.8	317	4.2	0.8
Delivery system . . . . .	655	3.9	0.8	316	4.2	0.8
Course registration activities . . . . .	678	3.8	1.0	312	4.1	0.9
Published grading policy . . . . .	657	4.0	0.9	309	4.1	0.9
Interaction with administrative personnel	646	3.8	1.1	311	4.1	1.0
Competency of the faculty . . . . .	680	4.0	0.9	316	4.4	0.8
Quality of the learning environment . . .	694	4.0	0.9	316	4.3	0.8
Process for assigning students to advisors	579	3.4	1.2	253	3.7	1.0
Quality of advising . . . . .	624	3.5	1.1	322	3.8	1.1
Applied nature of thesis, practicum, or dissertation . . . . .	468	3.8	1.0	255	4.2	0.9
Opportunity for intellectual growth . . . .	682	4.2	0.7	315	4.5	0.8
Faculty and student interaction . . . . .	678	4.1	0.8	311	4.4	0.8
Exposure to research scholars . . . . .	505	3.5	1.0	282	4.1	1.0

**Table 8 (Continued)**

**Ratings of Selected Statements Related to Academic Programs and Student Services:**

STATEMENT	ON-CAMPUS			OFF-CAMPUS		
	N	MEAN	SD	N	MEAN	SD
Opportunity for peer interaction . . . . .	666	4.2	0.8	316	4.5	0.8
Clarity of program catalog . . . . .	667	4.0	0.8	313	4.1	0.8
Correctness of student records (including transcripts) . . . . .	592	3.9	1.0	277	3.9	1.0
Availability of library and learning resource materials . . . . .	658	3.7	1.2	291	3.5	1.2
Adequacy of library and learning resource materials . . . . .	647	3.5	1.2	284	3.6	1.1
Orientation program relative to library services . . . . .	559	3.5	1.2	275	3.3	1.1
Training in access to information in electronic and other formats . . . . .	568	3.5	1.1	271	3.4	1.2
Availability of computing resources . . . . .	584	3.8	1.0	265	3.3	1.2
Adequacy of computing resources . . . . .	568	3.8	1.0	262	3.4	1.2
Access to information through technology . . . . .	578	3.9	1.0	273	3.5	1.2
Instructional support services (e.g., educational equipment and specialized facilities such as laboratories, audio visual and duplicating services) . . . . .	524	3.6	1.0	230	3.5	1.1
Infusion of information technology into the curricula . . . . .	578	3.7	1.0	274	3.5	1.1
Provisions for training in the use of technology . . . . .	539	3.6	1.1	272	3.4	1.2
Student development services . . . . .	446	3.6	0.9	206	3.6	1.0
Counseling and career development . . . . .	439	3.5	1.0	191	3.3	1.0

**Table 8 (Continued)**

**Ratings of Selected Statements Related to Academic Programs and Student Services:**

STATEMENT	ON-CAMPUS			OFF-CAMPUS		
	N	MEAN	SD	N	MEAN	SD
Remedial services available . . . . .	327	3.4	1.0	125	3.3	1.0
Student government opportunities . . . . .	296	3.4	0.9	119	3.4	1.0
Student behavior policies and procedures	455	3.8	0.8	193	3.9	0.9
Financial aid services . . . . .	498	3.8	1.0	225	3.8	1.1
Health services . . . . .	300	3.4	0.9	86	3.3	1.0
Alumni affairs . . . . .	308	3.5	0.9	102	3.5	0.9
Refund policies when withdrawing from courses . . . . .	417	3.5	1.1	136	3.6	1.0
Adequacy of physical resources in classrooms . . . . .	621	3.5	1.1	276	3.7	1.0
Safety and security of classroom buildings and the learning environment . . . . .	646	4.0	0.9	278	4.1	0.9
Overall quality of this academic program	671	4.0	0.8	306	4.3	0.8

RATING SCALE			
1	Very Dissatisfied	4	Satisfied
2	Dissatisfied	5	Very Satisfied
3	Neutral, Neither Agree nor Disagree	NA	Not Applicable
		U	Unknown or Unable to Answer

A caution should be made that when viewing these statistics, nearly all respondents offered a numerical response to statements such as **Clarity of written admission policies** (On-campus N = 678; Off-campus N = 318), **Length of the academic program** (On-campus N = 687; Off-campus N = 315), and **Quality of the learning environment** (On-campus N = 694; Off-campus N = 316). Responses were not made at the same level to **Student government opportunities** (On-campus N = 296; Off-campus N = 119) and **Health services** (On-campus N = 300; Off-campus N = 86). Although criteria related to student government and health services may be considered important by the Southern Association of Colleges and



Schools (*Criteria for Accreditation*, 1996), adult students (the majority of respondents to this survey) obviously did not share in this level of concern and frequently selected *Not Applicable* or *Unknown or Unable to Answer* to these and similar statements that may more appropriately apply to traditional students.

## DISCUSSION

When comparing responses of on-campus students and off-campus students, it is important to recall that nearly 80 percent of all on-campus respondents were enrolled in either a master's or specialist program, whereas nearly two-thirds of all off-campus respondents were enrolled in a doctoral program. Based on the sampling methodology associated with this study, this difference was expected.

As first introduced in *South Florida vs. Other Locations: Comparing Student Responses to a Satisfaction Survey* (1996), the results of these comparisons offer marked contrast to the Southern Association's traditional vision of the many benefits to residence and campus life. Off-campus respondents provided higher mean ratings than their on-campus counterparts for approximately two-thirds of all survey statements, including statements related to: instructional methods, delivery system, competency of the faculty, quality of the learning environment, opportunity for intellectual growth, faculty and student interaction, exposure to research scholars, and opportunity for peer interaction. Clearly, off-campus students did not perceive any significant disadvantage to residence away from campus. Instead, off-campus respondents indicated very high levels of satisfaction with the majority of the statements associated with this study. The summative statement **Overall quality of this academic program** received a higher rating from off-campus respondents (Mean = 4.3) than their on-campus counterparts (Mean = 4.0).

Although all statements received a positive rating, a close examination of Table 8 suggests that it may be useful to examine differences between on-campus respondents and off-campus respondents regarding the University's technology-based information resource infrastructure. Generally, on-campus respondents indicated higher levels of satisfaction with technology opportunities and access to information through technology than their off-campus counterparts.

Technology and the development of the University's information resource infrastructure received considerable attention in the *Master Plan* (1995) and the *Institutional Self-Study Report* (1996) and for the last few years the University has vigorously upgraded this infrastructure. In 1994, the University spent nearly \$2.5 million on the computing infrastructure, with over \$1.5 million devoted exclusively to the purchase of computing equipment (*Institutional Self-Study Report*; 1996, p.269). The University continues to support and upgrade the computing infrastructure, with over \$1.5 million budgeted in Fiscal Year 1996 - 1997 exclusively for computing equipment. The Abraham S. Fischler Center

for the Advancement of Education has specifically budgeted over \$500,000 for the purchase of computing equipment in Fiscal Year 1996 - 1997.

As identified in *South Florida vs. Other Locations: Comparing Student Responses to a Satisfaction Survey* (1996), the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education uses a variety of means to increase student use of the technology-based information resource infrastructure:

- The University's Electronic Library was recently redesigned as a Web page. Now, even students with low-end machines and minimal training in the use of the Internet can enjoy the simplicity of text-based access to the many databases and information resources available at this valuable information resource, URL < <http://localhost/var/local/html/el/index.html> > .
- Telephone contact hours for the Electronic Library and the Academic Computing help desk have also been expanded, allowing all students, including students in the western United States, to receive real-time assistance on weeknights.
- Technology training opportunities for students in the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education have also been enhanced in a variety of ways:
  - Cluster coordinators in many distance education programs have been issued high-end computers, which they use during cluster meetings to provide training opportunities for students.
  - In some distance education programs, students have been hired to assist peer students search the University's technology-based information resource network for pertinent literature.
  - In some distance education programs, students have been hired to assist as the local technology liaison, offering support to students and reporting concerns and opportunities to campus-based faculty.
  - Permanent facilities with state-of-the-art computing machinery, secured at key off-campus locations, further enhances computing opportunities for many off-campus students. The new facility at Orlando is the most current example of the development of this enhanced technology infrastructure.
  - Technology training was pervasive at each 1996 Summer Institute, with training scheduled for all constituents: cluster coordinators, practicum and MARP advisors, and students.

It is important to emphasize that the above activities are currently in place—they are not part of a future plan. It is also important to emphasize that, overall, off-campus students indicated higher levels of satisfaction with academic program and student services than their on-campus counterparts. Finally, it may be useful to emphasize the observation in Table 5 that off-campus students currently use electronic mail (and it is assumed other technology-based information resources) with a higher degree of frequency than their on-campus counterparts. With the current level of interest and budget devoted to technology, it is not surprising that the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education was the most frequent user of the University's Electronic Library, with 15,406 entries to this information resource in Fiscal Year 1995 - 1996.

## SUMMARY

This study provided contrasts between on-campus students in the Abraham S. Fischler Center for the Advancement of Education and their off-campus counterparts, with focus directed to a variety of survey statements associated with the University's compliance with accreditation criteria. For nearly two-thirds of all statements, off-campus students offered higher mean ratings than their on-campus counterparts to issues purposely linked to accreditation criteria mandated by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Prior assumptions that the Center needs to continue to expand resources and training activities to improve access to the University's technology-based information resource network were confirmed. Although off-campus students did not express the same level of satisfaction with the University's information infrastructure as their on-campus counterparts, both groups of students indicated positive levels of satisfaction. It is anticipated that the University's current expenditure of funds for technology and technology-related training will result in greater use and satisfaction with this evolving resource.

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# Nova Southeastern University

## SURVEY OF STUDENTS OF THE FISCHLER CENTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION

### Purpose of This Survey:

As part of a continuous process of evaluation of academic programs and student services, the purpose of this survey is to determine your general level of satisfaction with your experience at the University. Results will be used to help the University provide an improved educational experience for future students.

### Survey Methodology:

This survey is to be distributed to a sample of students who attend class sometime between March 25 to April 25, 1996. If by chance you receive this survey in multiple classes, please complete this survey only once.

### SECTION I: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

**Instructions:** Check the appropriate response(s) for the following identifiers

**For tracking purposes only, please identify your academic program:**

- Ed.D. Program for Educational Leaders
- Ed.D. Programs for Higher Education
- Ed.D. Programs in Child and Youth Studies
- Ed.D. Programs in Instructional Technology and Distance Education
- M.S. or Ed.S. Graduate Teacher Ed Program
- M.S. in Speech-Language Pathology
- M.S. Life Span Care and Administration
- M.S. Instructional Technology and Distance Education

#### Gender

- Female
- Male

#### Ethnic Group

- African-American
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic
- White
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Where do you attend the majority of your classes?

- Davie Campus or East Campus
- North Miami Beach Campus
- Cluster Location in Broward, Dade, Monroe, or Palm Beach County
- Cluster Location in Another Florida County
- Cluster Location in Another State
- Cluster Location in Another Country
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**If you have received technology-based instruction in any of your courses, which media have you experienced?**  
*Check all selections that apply.*

- Audiobridge
- Compressed Video
- Electronic Mail
- Electronic Classroom
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Excluding courses this term, how many courses have you completed in this academic program at the University?**

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0 courses | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 courses         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 course  | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 courses         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 courses | <input type="checkbox"/> 7 courses         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 courses | <input type="checkbox"/> 8 courses         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 courses | <input type="checkbox"/> 9 or more courses |

Please turn to the other side ➡

Why did you decide to attend NSU? Check all selections that apply.

- \_\_\_ Academic Reputation
- \_\_\_ Admissions Standards
- \_\_\_ Advice of Counselors and Teachers
- \_\_\_ Availability of Scholarships or Financial Aid
- \_\_\_ Convenience
- \_\_\_ Cost
- \_\_\_ Location
- \_\_\_ Small Class Size
- \_\_\_ Social Atmosphere
- \_\_\_ Type of Programs Available
- \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

If you had not attended NSU, would you have attended:

- \_\_\_ Another private college or university in South Florida
- \_\_\_ Another private college or university in Florida, but not in South Florida
- \_\_\_ A private college or university in another state
- \_\_\_ A state college or university in South Florida
- \_\_\_ A state college or university in Florida, but not in South Florida
- \_\_\_ A state college or university in another state
- \_\_\_ Not attended a college or university
- \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION II: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND STUDENT SERVICES

Please review the following rating scale and then mark or circle your reaction to each statement:

RATING SCALE			
1	Very Dissatisfied	4	Satisfied
2	Dissatisfied	5	Very Satisfied
3	Neutral, Neither Agree nor Disagree	NA	Not Applicable
		U	Unknown or Unable to Answer

- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Clarity of written admission policies
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Clarity of written policy on transfer of credit from other institutions
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Clarity of written completion requirements
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Clarity of written curricular offerings, as identified in program catalog
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Program orientation
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Length of the academic program
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Length of the individual courses
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Instructional methods
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Delivery system
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Course registration activities
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Published grading policy
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Interaction with administrative personnel
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Competency of the faculty

- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Quality of the learning environment
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Process for assigning students to advisors
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Quality of advising
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Applied nature of thesis, practicum, or dissertation
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Opportunity for intellectual growth
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Faculty and student interaction
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Exposure to research scholars
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Opportunity for peer interaction
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Clarity of program catalog
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Correctness of student records (including transcripts)
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Availability of library and learning resource materials
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Adequacy of library and learning resource materials
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Orientation program relative to library services
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Training in access to information in electronic and other formats
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Availability of computing resources
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Adequacy of computing resources
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Access to information through technology
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Instructional support services (e.g., educational equipment and specialized facilities such as laboratories, audio visual and duplicating services)
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Infusion of information technology into the curricula
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Provisions for training in the use of technology
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Student development services
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Counseling and career development
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Remedial services available
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Student government opportunities
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Student behavior policies and procedures
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Financial aid services
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Health services
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Alumni affairs
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Refund policies when withdrawing from courses
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Adequacy of physical resources in classrooms
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Safety and security of classroom buildings and the learning environment
- 1 2 3 4 5 NA U Overall quality of this academic program

**For tracking purposes only, please list:**

\_\_\_\_\_ The number of this course

\_\_\_\_\_ Today's date

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RESEARCH AND PLANNING  
3301 College Avenue  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33314-7796





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<b>Printed Name:</b> Thomas W. MacFarland	<b>Organization:</b> Nova Southeastern University
<b>Address:</b> 3301 College Avenue Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33314	<b>Telephone Number:</b> ( 954 ) 424-5717
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