

THE 1997 DRAKE STUDENT SURVEY

A Report of the Findings

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INTRODUCTION

Each year, since 1991, Drake University students have been asked to complete "The Drake Student Survey", a questionnaire that ascertains their attitudes and perceptions about a variety of issues. The Drake Student Survey normally has been attached to the student preregistration forms in the spring. In 1996-97, questionnaires also were mailed to graduating seniors, both in the fall and in the spring. Responses were received from 1223 students.

Questions included on the 1997 survey asked students:

- to assess several dimensions of the overall Drake experience, academic and non-academic - including best parts of the experience and the major complaints;
- to assess their own strength in several skills and maturity areas in comparison with when they entered Drake University;
- for perceptions of classes and the general academic experience;
- the extent to which they hear and experience negative comments toward various groups;
- to rate their satisfaction with various dimensions of student life and services Drake University.

The responses to these questions are presented in the following pages. Most of the analysis focuses on comparison of responses from students majoring in the various colleges and schools and comparison across years from first to senior.

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1 presents respondent characteristics by college or school. The 1996-97 response is notable in that it marks both the highest number of responses and the highest response rate ever achieved with the Drake Student Survey. Predictably, this also is the most representative respondent group.

- The response group closely mirrors the full-time student body distribution across colleges - with Arts and Sciences and Journalism very slightly underrepresented and Business and Education slightly overrepresented among respondents.
- The distribution across classification of Year in School is almost identical to the distribution of full-time undergraduate students.
- The gender distribution is very close to the actual distribution across the undergraduate student body.
- The representation of members of Greek social organizations is very close to their actual representation in the student body.

Thus, the respondent group in 1996-97 appear to be very representative of the full-time undergraduate student body.

Table 1:
Respondent Characteristics: Respondents from each College with Specified Characteristics -
 Percentages 1997

Number of Cases	All Univ.	All Resp.	COLLEGE ¹				
			A & S (464)	B & PA (265)	Educ (79)	J & MC (161)	P & HS (240)
College							
All Respond.	--	--	38	22	7	13	20
FT. Und.	--	--	40	21	6	14	20
Yr in School							
First Year (P1)	24	23	25	22	22	22	22
Sophomore (P2)	25	26	34	21	22	26	17
Junior (P3)	20	21	18	25	27	24	18
Senior (P4 & P5)	29	28	23	32	30	28	45
Unclassified	2	2					
Gender							
Men	40	35	35	48	20	41	59
Women	60	61	65	52	80	59	69
Not identified		4					
Living Arraignments							
Residence Halls		56	66	56	53	62	49
Greek Houses		9	7	10	11	18	6
With Family		7	9	8	8	3	8
Independently		24	19	27	28	17	38
Not reported		5					
Greek Soc. Mem.							
Yes	27	29	30	34	29	37	22

THE OVERALL DRAKE EXPERIENCE

Respondents to the survey were asked several questions that provide a summary look at their satisfaction with the Drake University experience. Table 2 shows their responses to a request that they identify the "3 best parts" of the Drake experience.

- Academics were identified by the most students in all categories except students in the School of Education and first year students.
- Friends and relationships ranked first for Education majors and for first year students, and second for all other categories.
- Personal freedom also ranked as an important factor - with all other identified categories trailing far behind.
- Identification of professors as one of the 3 best parts of the Drake Experience increased with year in school - from 16% of the first-year and 41% of the seniors students.
- The importance of Greek Life, extracurricular activities and intercollegiate athletics dropped off with increase in year in school, or at the senior year.

¹ College affiliation was not reported for 14 students.

Table 2:
The Three Best Parts of the Drake Experience - Percentages - 1997

Three Best Parts	All Resp	College					Year in School			
		AS	BPA	Ed	JMC	PHS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Academics	72	73	71	63	69	78	64	76	72	75
Friends and Relationships	63	65	51	64	66	69	65	69	61	58
Personal freedom	52	55	48	45	50	55	55	57	51	44
Professors	27	28	28	28	26	26	16	17	31	41
People/atmosphere	22	22	23	21	21	23	23	21	25	21
Greek life	19	18	24	24	24	12	23	20	19	18
Extracurricular activities	17	16	16	17	24	16	19	17	20	15
Social life	11	8	14	16	12	12	17	11	7	11
Intercollegiate athletics	10	9	15	16	5	6	16	8	6	7
Other	3	4	3	3	5	2	1	2	4	7

Students also were asked about the three most difficult adjustments that they had made in college. These responses (as shown in Table 3) indicate that:

- "managing time" was the most frequently selected item for all categories [as has been true with every survey].
- either "adjusting to academics" and "balancing roles" rated second for all groups. The second choice response seems to be somewhat tied to year in school, with first and second year students more likely to identify "adjusting to academics" as a challenge, and juniors and seniors more likely to identify "balancing roles."

It is likely that managing time and balancing roles are very closely aligned issues for most students. In addition, it appears that as students progress through their college years they become more aware of the fact that they are dealing with multiple roles. For some reason, managing money was not an issue for the 1996-97 sophomores.

Table 3:
Most Difficult Adjustments Faced in College: Percentages - 1997

Adjustments	All Resp.	College					Yr in School			
		AS	BPA	Educ	JMC	PHS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Managing time	68	68	67	75	68	69	74	63	67	69
Adjusting to academics	57	52	64	69	48	60	66	62	53	47
Balancing roles	51	55	50	44	47	48	38	50	55	61
Managing money	43	42	41	38	54	40	39	15	44	43
Being away from home	31	30	26	32	31	37	37	33	32	23
Living in res. hall	19	20	21	17	19	14	15	24	16	19
Making friends	19	19	18	15	18	22	22	15	22	17
Other	5	7	5	3	5	3	3	3	3	11

The request that they identify their most important complaints, garnered a high level of agreement (Table 4). Among respondents in all categories “expense” was without question the single most common complaint, with 71% of the respondents identifying this issue.

- The concern with expense differed somewhat across colleges, with Education students least likely and Pharmacy students most likely to note it as a complaint.
- Concern with expense diminishes among upper level students. This may suggest that students who are most concerned with the issue leave Drake before the final years.

By comparison with the first item, there was relatively little agreement about the other "complaints". However in all categories the second most commonly selected complaint might be characterized as an issue of campus culture or attitude. The second most common response was “emphasis on Greek Life”, “student apathy”, or “general attitudes.” Juniors and seniors were most likely to be concerned about student apathy.

Table 4:
Most Important Complaints About the Drake Experience: Percentages - 1997

Complaints	All Resp	College					Yr in School			
		AS	BPA	Ed	JMC	PHS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Expense	71	65	71	64	67	86	75	74	69	66
Emphasis on Greek life	35	36	28	37	37	38	36	40	35	29
Student apathy	34	36	31	32	45	29	26	34	41	38
General attitudes	32	33	29	40	36	30	30	40	29	31
Bureaucracy	24	24	28	16	27	21	18	20	28	30
Lack of activities	22	22	20	18	24	22	25	21	26	17
Neg attitudes toward Greeks	20	19	25	26	24	12	22	21	18	20
Curriculum and classes	18	18	21	22	8	19	20	15	17	19
Residence halls	18	19	19	22	14	14	29	20	13	10
Other	16	18	16	12	14	16	10	10	15	28

Student responses to questions about what characterizes the Drake Experiences and about their overall satisfaction with several areas central to the Drake University experience provide some excellent information about the way that Drake students relate to the University. Table 5 displays percentages who agree or strongly agree that various characteristics reflect the Drake Experience.

A high percentage of the respondents agree that Drake and their major are helping them prepare for a career. The highest level of agreement with these statements was among Education, Journalism and Pharmacy students. The lowest level of agreement was among A&S students. In addition 75% or more of the respondents agreed that they have the opportunity to develop leadership skills, sufficient opportunity for involvement on campus, that they are being prepared for life-long learning and that Drake fosters respect for intellectual honesty. Pharmacy respondents had the highest level of agreement with questions about opportunity for interaction with other students, preparation for life-long learning and fostering of respect for intellectual honesty.

Relatively little fluctuation occurred across years in school on most of these items. The exceptions were increases in agreement about career preparation from first to second year, and drop off - either steady or in the last year or two - in agreement about all other items except development of leadership skills. There was a fairly steady drop off in agreement with items that relate to opportunities for interaction on campus and the sense of community on campus.

Table 5: Strongly Agree or Agree that Following Reflect the Drake Experience - Percentages- 1997

Agree that following has been Drake experience:	All Resp	College					Yr in School			
		AS	BPA	Ed	JMC	PHS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Drake helping prepare for career	85	75	87	95	92	92	80	85	87	85
My major provides necessary career knowledge	85	76	85	94	92	92	80	84	88	84
Drake provides opportunity for interaction with other students	84	84	83	77	86	86	87	85	84	80
I have opportunity to develop leadership skills	78	75	75	82	83	82	77	76	79	77
Suff. opportunity for involvement in campus	78	79	77	78	79	77	84	80	77	73
Drake preparing me for life-long learning	75	74	74	78	73	81	74	80	75	72
Drake fosters respect for intellectual honesty	75	72	74	64	80	81	79	79	72	69
Encouraged to do community service	57	58	53	55	57	60	65	55	58	51
Drake characterized by sense of community	36	32	37	46	33	41	45	36	33	30

When asked about their overall satisfaction with the Drake University experience, a high percentage of the students indicated satisfaction (Table 6). Three quarters or more of the students indicated satisfaction with the quality of classes and experience with faculty. Sixty-nine and 72% respectively were satisfied with academic advising and the overall Drake experience. The overall satisfaction with Drake services was somewhat lower.

Table 6: Overall Satisfaction with the Drake University Experience - Percentages-1997

Very Satis. or Satis.	All Resp.	College					Year In School				Gend.	
		AS	BPA	Ed	JMC	PHS	FY	So	Jun	Sr	M	F
Quality of Classes	76	77	77	70	81	72	77	81	72	72	75	77
Experience with Faculty	75	77	72	72	78	70	75	78	70	73	74	75
Overall Drake Experience	72	77	70	62	76	67	71	80	69	70	71	74
Academic Advising	69	73	70	57	78	56	64	75	73	64	72	67
Drake Services	56	58	53	52	55	56	55	60	60	49	54	57

Relatively little variation occurred across colleges on the overall satisfaction items. However Journalism students were most satisfied with quality of classes, their experience with faculty, and academic advising. School of Education and Pharmacy students were less satisfied with academic advising. Interestingly, first year and last year students were least satisfied with both academic advising and Drake services.

THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

The central focus, the reason for being, for the University is academics. As indicated in Table 2, Academics is selected by more students than is any other items as "One of the Three Best Parts" of the Drake experience, and very few students put concerns about academics on their list of "Three Most Important Complaints."

Despite the relatively high level of satisfaction, students offer many ideas about what the academic experience is and what it should be. To better understand student perceptions of the Drake academic environment, students were asked to provide information about, and assessment of, a variety of aspects of the academic experience. First among these was to identify what they feel are the most important characteristics of a good class. Responses to this question appear in Table 7.

Table 7:
Most Important Characteristics of a Good Class: Percentages - 1997

Characteristics of a Good Class	All Resp.	College					Yr in School			
		A & S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Material relevant	62	59	66	51	61	69	61	61	64	63
Caring professor	50	44	49	57	55	57	53	54	56	43
Knowledgeable professor	49	46	51	48	49	53	46	46	50	55
Class challenges students	37	44	34	29	36	29	32	37	37	42
Interaction	35	39	30	35	48	24	38	34	30	34
Small size	24	25	27	21	20	20	27	24	22	21
Fair eval techniques	23	22	27	16	16	29	25	26	23	22
Multiple teaching methods	16	18	11	36	13	16	16	15	17	16
Other	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	4

The most commonly identified characteristic of a good class for all categories except Education majors is having relevant material. This is followed by either "caring" or "knowledgeable" professor. Respondents also frequently selected "class challenges" and "interaction" as important characteristics of a good class. Seniors were less interested than others in "caring" professors and more interested in "knowledgeable" professors and "challenging classes".

Seniors were less likely to select "caring" professor and more likely to select "knowledgeable" professor as important. Seniors also were more likely than others to select "challenging class" as an important factor. By comparison, first year students were likely to select small size and interaction as important characteristics of a good class.

Several questions asked respondents to evaluate their experiences with faculty. When asked to indicate their feelings about faculty, on a scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" respondents were quite positive (Table 8). Eighty to 90% of the respondents identified the faculty as approachable and enthusiastic and indicated satisfaction with the opportunity for personal interaction with faculty.

Table 8:
Strong Agreement or Agreement with Statements about Faculty - Percentages 1997

Faculty	Agree	All Resp.	College					Year in School			
			A & S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Faculty are approachable		89	93	89	86	90	84	84	91	90	90
I am satisfied with the opportunity for personal interaction with faculty		84	85	85	80	91	78	79	87	84	84
Professors are enthusiastic		81	83	80	79	86	77	78	83	80	82
Professors are caring		77	80	77	80	86	67	78	80	78	74
I am satisfied with my academic advisor		75	78	80	66	82	63	71	78	79	75
Faculty are sensitive to student needs		73	73	74	75	84	65	68	77	73	74

Overall, Journalism and Mass Communication students were most satisfied with their experiences with faculty. Arts and Sciences and Business students were second most satisfied in most categories. Pharmacy and Health Sciences students were least satisfied when evaluating faculty. Satisfaction with all questions about faculty improved after the first year, with some drop off from junior to senior year in agreement that faculty are caring and with satisfaction with academic advisor.

Students also were asked several questions about their perceptions of classes and major (Table 9). More than 80% of all respondents agreed that classes had been challenging and that they were satisfied with the quality of their major and with the education they were receiving in their major. Arts and Sciences students were most likely to agree that their classes are challenging. Education majors were most satisfied with the education they are receiving in their major, and Education and Journalism majors were most satisfied with the quality of their major. Arts and Sciences students were most likely to want more opportunity for interaction, and Pharmacy and Health Sciences students most often agreed that the typical class size is too large.

Perceptions of the major and of classes showed minimal variation across year in school was minimal, though there was some drop off in agreement that classes had been challenging, that classes provide an opportunity for open exchange of ideas, and that there should be more opportunity for interaction as students move toward their senior year.

Table 9: Strong Agreement or Agreement with Statements about Classes and Major- Percentages 1997

Major and Classes	All Resp.	College					Year in School			
		A & S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
My classes have been challenging	89	91	88	87	84	89	91	91	89	86
I am satisfied with the quality of my major	82	80	84	86	86	81	82	83	82	81
I am satisfied with the education I am receiving in my major	81	81	79	85	82	79	81	85	80	80
My classes provide opportunity for open exchange of ideas	74	76	72	79	86	64	69	76	80	70
There should be more opportunity for interaction in classes	42	47	39	33	39	40	47	44	42	35
The typical class size too large	18	19	11	12	10	31	16	16	17	21

As seen in Table 10, student satisfaction with academic services was somewhat lower than satisfaction with faculty and classes. The highest level of satisfaction was expressed in relation to access to computers, with seniors much less satisfied. The next highest satisfaction was expressed with the Dean's office followed by the Admissions Office, Registrar's Office and the registration process.

A high percentage of the respondents indicated "not applicable" in relation to several service areas, suggesting that they had had no experience with that office or service. The table is divided with those services with which two-thirds or more of the respondents had experience on top, and those which most students indicated were not applicable below.

Access to computers was rated highest among the services with which most respondents had experience, followed by the Admissions Office, the Registrar's Office and the registration process. Education students expressed the highest level of satisfaction with computer access while Business students were least satisfied. Business and Pharmacy and Health Sciences students were most satisfied with the registration process. Business students were by far the most satisfied with the Career Center and A&S students were the least satisfied.

Table 10:
Evaluation of Specific Academic Services as "Very Satisfactory" or "Satisfactory "-
 Percentages-1997

Services	Not Applic	% of Exper	College					Yr in School			
			AS	BPA	Ed	JMC	PHS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Access to Computers	1	81	83	77	92	82	81	86	89	82	71
Admissions Office	15	62	59	65	59	59	64	66	65	62	53
Registrar's Office	15	59	57	59	66	51	68	57	61	62	58
Registration Process	1	59	55	65	55	54	66	53	58	67	62
Career Center	31	52	45	70	51	50	48	44	48	61	56
Availability of Books/Period	6	51	52	53	61	46	45	60	57	44	44
My Dean's Office	50	68	63	78	85	62	63	65	68	74	67
Provost's Office	60	53	56	44	67	57	51	59	56	53	50
President's Office	63	49	48	46	55	50	51	44	59	47	47
SDLC	64	44	39	40	55	50	49	37	51	46	40

More of the students indicated lack of experience with several of the offices. Three of these offices, the Dean's, Provost's and President's offices very likely have a unique type of contact with the students. Certainly, most students are likely to have significant contact with the Dean's office only when they are having difficulty. Often this may be academic difficulty which cannot be resolved by that office, and which often results in negative action from the office. Similarly, for most students the only significant contact with the President's and Provost's offices is in relation to requests and problems which may be relatively unlikely to be resolved according to the student's wishes. Satisfaction with the Student Development and Learning Center was relatively low and was varied. First, 64% of the respondents indicated that the SDLC was not applicable. Among those who had experience only 44% reported satisfaction. Satisfaction was lowest among A&S students and among first year students.

Satisfaction with every one of the academic services areas drops off during the senior or junior and senior year. Some show a steady decline from first to last year. In other areas, satisfaction increases from first to sophomore or junior year, then drops off during the senior year. This may reflect a "personality of the class". However, some of the areas are predictable given the living situation and focus of seniors. For instance the drop off in satisfaction with access to computers during the senior year very likely is due to the fact that more seniors live off campus.

Students were asked to evaluate the extent to which a variety of areas of knowledge and skill had changed since coming to Drake University (Table 11). Overall, these evaluations were quite positive with more than 90% of almost every category indicating that they were stronger or much stronger in general knowledge and major field knowledge. The only response group below 90% on these two questions was first-year student perceptions of gain in knowledge in their major field. Since most first-year students have little contact with their major field, in fact may not have firmly settled on a major field, lower percentages might be expected on this response category.

Eighty percent or more of the respondents indicated that they had gained strength in ability to think critically and computer skills and understanding. The fluctuation across colleges on the first three items is relatively small. On other items there are interesting variation among colleges. The most dramatic differences appear in relation to historical awareness and mathematical skills.

As would be hoped, the percentage of students indicating increased strength is higher at the upper class levels on most items. Interestingly, more than 90% of the first-year students indicate that they have increased their general knowledge since coming to Drake. In relation to every area except ability to work cooperatively and reading speed and comprehension, the greatest increase in percentage perceiving improvement since coming to Drake occurs between the first and second years.

Table 11:
Specified Academic Skills & Knowledge are “Much Stronger” or “Stronger” Than When They Entered Drake - Percentages-1997

Acad. Skills & Knowledge	All Resp.	College					Year in School			
		A & S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
General Knowledge	94	95	91	95	93	94	92	94	95	94
Knowledge of Major Field	92	92	91	95	96	92	79	91	98	99
Ability to Think Critically	87	88	85	87	84	86	79	87	87	91
Computer Skills and Understanding	80	76	84	85	84	79	73	84	83	83
Analytical/Prob Solving	75	73	78	65	69	83	66	71	80	80
Ability to Work Independently	71	73	69	71	68	72	68	76	69	71
Prep. for Grad/Prof Schools	68	70	63	58	60	75	55	67	74	73
Writing Skills	67	69	65	71	82	57	62	69	66	71
Ability to Work Cooperatively	66	61	64	72	72	73	58	60	76	72
Leadership Abilities	66	64	67	73	71	66	58	63	72	71
Historical Awareness	51	69	39	56	58	26	49	57	52	49
Reading Speed and Comprehension	49	51	49	44	55	43	47	45	57	49
Public Speaking Ability	46	38	49	58	51	50	23	42	56	60
Mathematical Skills	41	33	63	40	12	50	39	38	46	41

Given the generally positive evaluations of the academic experience it is not surprising that 50% or less of the respondents perceive a need for improvement in any specific area of the academic experience (Table 12).

Table 12:
Three Most Important Things That Should Be Done To Improve The Drake Academic Experience Percentages - 1997

Steps to Improve Drake Academic Exper.	All Rsp	College					Yr in School			
		AS	BPA	Ed	JMC	PHS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
More interesting courses	47	48	49	37	51	44	53	46	50	44
Variety teaching methods	35	33	36	49	41	30	35	37	38	32
More out-of-class opportunities	34	37	37	26	32	30	29	32	33	39
More interaction	34	36	36	28	38	25	39	38	32	27
Change requirements	33	38	28	35	28	28	29	39	29	32
More student support services	32	27	30	32	28	43	32	29	38	28
Reduce class size	30	26	26	24	29	43	33	27	28	29
More enthusiastic professors	25	23	28	31	23	25	29	25	25	24
More caring professors	15	14	13	24	14	17	17	17	12	15
Other	9	12	8	7	10	5	4	6	8	17

As in previous years, developing more interesting courses is the most popular option for improving the academic experience. This item was most likely to draw agreement from Journalism majors and from first-year students. Arts and Sciences students were most likely to express a need for more out of class experiences and for a change in requirements. Education students were most likely to want a variety of teaching methods, and more enthusiastic and more caring professors. Pharmacy and Health Sciences students most often expressed a need for more students support services and for reduced class sizes. There was relatively little variation across year in school in areas identified as needing improvement. However, first year students were more likely to identify a need for more interesting classes, more student support services and reduced class sizes. Seniors were more interested in increased out-of-class experiences

PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Students were asked to indicate whether several personal and interpersonal work and social skills had strengthened while at Drake. Table 13 indicates the percentages who said that they perceived their own development in these areas as "much stronger" or "stronger" than when they entered Drake. Journalism and Education students were most likely to perceive increased strength in the interpersonal skills. In most areas the responses were most positive among juniors and/or seniors.

Table 13: Personal and Interpersonal Skills are "Much Stronger" or "Stronger" Than When They Entered Drake - Percentages 1997

Personal and Interpersonal Skills	All Resp.	College					Year in School			
		A & S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Identify Your Strengths/Weaknesses	83	84	84	80	89	80	79	83	85	85
Interpersonal skills	75	73	75	76	82	76	72	74	80	75
Develop code of ethics	71	67	70	77	79	70	64	71	71	74
Define own value system	69	73	63	75	70	64	64	70	67	71
Understanding of Individ. Identity	66	68	60	71	72	64	61	68	66	67
Skills resolving ethical dilemmas	54	52	51	61	61	53	46	53	58	58
Understanding Your Sexuality	42	44	36	44	49	39	39	41	38	47

ISSUES OF DIVERSITY

Over the years, the University and the Drake Student Survey have focused on diversity. In 1996, respondents were asked about perceptions of their own change in relation to some diversity issues and perceptions about the effects of a variety of measures on the Drake climate for diversity. In 1997, they were asked about their satisfaction with diversity on campus (Table 14) and the frequency with which they hear insensitive or disparaging remarks about a variety of groups of people (Table 15).

When asked about changes in their knowledge and attitudes since coming to Drake, 60% or more of the students indicated that their acceptance and knowledge of different beliefs and races and cultures had improved since coming to Drake. Percentages were somewhat lower when asked about acceptance of disabilities. A relatively low percentage of respondents express satisfaction with the gender and racial/ethnic diversity of the student body. Satisfaction with gender diversity of faculty is somewhat higher (about 60%), but satisfaction with racial and ethnic diversity of faculty is relatively low.

Differences across colleges in response to these items were fairly consistent. Students in Education were most likely to feel that their acceptance and knowledge were stronger than when they entered Drake. Journalism students were least satisfied with diversity among students and racial diversity of faculty. Arts and Sciences students were least satisfied with the gender diversity of faculty.

Table 14:
Perceptions about Diversity-Percentages 1997

	All Resp.	College					Yr in School			
		A & S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Stronger or Much Stronger										
Acceptance of Diff/ Beliefs	64	66	62	70	65	61	63	64	70	64
Knowledge of Races/Cultures	63	64	61	67	64	64	62	62	70	59
Relationships with Persons of Dif. Races/Cultures	60	59	63	60	59	61	63	62	63	53
Acceptance of Disabilities	49	48	45	65	47	51	41	47	56	51
Satisfied or Very Satisfied										
Gender diversity of students	45	45	47	49	38	47	44	43	43	47
Race/ethnic diversity of students	33	32	35	34	23	37	36	33	33	29
Agree or Strongly Agree										
There is sufficient gender diversity among faculty- in my major	62	54	65	76	60	71	64	61	64	61
among other faculty	59	55	62	61	55	70	63	55	64	56
There is sufficient racial/ethnic diversity among faculty- in my major	42	36	50	22	29	59	46	40	3	40
among other faculty	43	40	48	34	36	57	47	41	46	38

Respondents also were asked about the extent to which they hear disparaging remarks from faculty, staff and students about people with various characteristics (Table 15). Answers to these questions were consistent with findings in previous years. A high percentage of students report hearing disparaging remarks from other students. By comparison the percentage reporting that they hear such remarks from faculty and staff is relatively low. Among faculty, the highest percentage of reported negative comments are gender based, about both men and women. Remarks from staff are reported as most often being heard about women and about racial and ethnic minorities. Students reportedly most often make disparaging remarks about gays, lesbians and bi-sexuals.

Table 15: Students Reporting That They “often” or “Sometimes” Hear Disparaging Remarks about Categories of Individuals - Percentages 1997

Often or Sometimes Hear Disparaging Remarks	All	College					Soc. Org.		Gender	
	Resp	A&S	B&PA	Educ	J&MC	P&HS	Grk	Ind	Male	Fem
By Faculty about:										
women	13	16	9	18	13	11	8	13	16	15
men	11	13	8	17	10	6	8	11	10	13
racial/ethnic minorities	6	7	5	7	7	5	8	6	6	7
gay, lesbian & bisexuals	6	8	3	10	9	3	5	7	7	7
internationals	5	4	4	9	5	9	4	4	7	7
nontraditional students	5	5	5	10	7	4	3	4	6	8
people with disabilities	2	2	0	7	2	1	1	2	3	2
By Staff about:										
racial/ethnic minorities	7	6	4	9	11	5	4	5	9	8
women	7	9	6	12	7	5	6	6	10	9
men	5	6	4	9	13	5	3	6	11	6
gay, lesbian & bisexuals	5	6	4	6	7	4	4	4	6	8
people with disabilities	2	1	1	9	3	2	1	1	4	2
internationals	4	4	4	3	5	4	2	3	8	5
nontraditional students	1	2	3	6	4	3	2	4	4	3
By Students about:										
gay, lesbian & bisexuals	66	67	61	64	78	63	64	75	63	60
women	52	55	47	54	65	45	49	57	55	50
racial/ethnic minorities	53	51	48	51	65	54	46	59	54	51
men	36	39	28	36	48	31	37	40	34	35
internationals	36	32	33	29	45	46	26	38	41	40
nontraditional students	33	28	31	35	42	37	21	26	38	34
people with disabilities	14	12	13	21	20	13	16	16	14	11

SOCIAL LIFE AND STUDENT SERVICES

Students were asked to evaluate several aspects of social life and student services on a scale from very satisfactory through very unsatisfactory. Those items that relate most directly to the social life and living experiences of students on the Drake campus are presented in Table 16.

There is a relatively clear relationship between year in school and evaluation of several of the social and student services (Table 16). There is a fairly steady drop from first to senior year in satisfaction with the Bell Center, residence halls, religious organizations, and sense of community. It is likely that the drop in satisfaction reflects reduced access or relevance among students who have moved off campus. Other items display a drop in satisfaction from the junior to senior year. These include the student life center, International Center, and campus security. By comparison, there is a steady, or senior year increase, in satisfaction with the Counseling Center, Olmsted food service, Hubbel dining hall, and the Health Service.

Table 16:
Evaluation of Social and Student Services as “Very Satisfactory” or “Satisfactory”
 - Percentages-1997

Social and Student Services	All Resp.	College					Yr in School			
		A & S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Bell Center	77	77	74	81	77	81	86	77	79	69
Student Life Center	57	53	56	67	61	58	53	56	63	54
International Center	52	56	51	68	51	39	43	54	68	47
Residential Life Office	52	53	47	46	56	56	48	55	54	54
Residence Halls	52	49	51	52	55	55	53	50	39	33
Campus Religious Organizations	50	48	42	60	46	62	55	50	48	47
Counseling Center	47	40	55	52	48	48	40	41	55	50
Gender diversity of students	45	45	47	49	38	47	44	43	43	47
Olmsted Food Service	45	45	43	43	46	49	47	44	39	51
Campus Security	43	44	37	44	40	50	38	39	50	45
Disability Resource Center	42	43	36	57	46	39	38	48	39	41
Hubbel Dining Hall	31	30	26	39	28	40	36	24	29	35
Health Service	27	26	23	34	21	36	24	18	30	36

The level of satisfaction expressed in relation to Drake business offices is lower than for many other areas of campus life (Table 17). The highest satisfaction was with the Cashier’s office (57%), and the lowest was with Telecommunications (38%). Again, there tends to be some drop in satisfaction among seniors.

Table 17:
Evaluation of Business Offices as “Very Satisfactory” or “Satisfactory” - Percentages-1997

Business Offices	All Resp.	College					Yr in School			
		A & S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Cashier's Office	57	56	60	59	50	58	58	60	59	51
D-Shoppe Book Store	55	50	53	62	53	63	60	51	52	54
Financial Aid										
Financial Aid Staff	49	46	39	56	52	57	47	52	53	44
Availability of Fin. Aid	49	53	44	64	42	47	49	49	51	50
Computer Store	43	37	47	50	39	49	39	44	44	46
Telecommunications Office	38	35	33	44	46	38	41	38	42	30

The last area of student life and social services about which respondents were asked were student activities. The highest satisfaction was expressed in relation to Fine Arts productions and intramural programs, with intercollegiate athletics also seen as satisfactory by more than half of the respondents. Only about one-third of the students expressed satisfaction with student government, and with Drake Broadcasting and KDRK broadcasting.

Table 18: Evaluation of Student Activities as “Very Satisfactory” or “Satisfactory” by College and Year-Percentages-1997

Student Activities	All Resp.	College					Yr in School			
		A&S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Fine Arts Productions	74	79	63	73	77	72	75	82	71	69
Intramural Program	63	66	64	66	57	61	63	64	64	63
Intercollegiate Athletics	52	53	50	53	49	54	59	56	50	43
Drake Magazine	45	43	39	44	54	46	41	46	49	42
Times-Delphic	44	41	41	48	47	51	52	44	43	37
Periphery	41	43	30	43	52	34	36	34	39	46
Student Government	35	32	42	33	32	40	41	37	38	26
Drake Broadcasting	34	25	32	42	46	38	34	37	32	34
KDRK Radio	31	27	28	41	46	27	39	29	30	30

When asked about the most important things, outside of academics, that should be done to improve the Drake Student experience students focused on a variety of issues (Table 19). The most frequent responses were “build school spirit” and provide a “real student union”. These are both items that were frequently offered as written responses to this item in 1996 and thus were included as options in the 1997 survey. This is consistent with the long recognized concern with the need for community and for greater identity with the University.

Some of the responses that are chosen by fewer students, none-the-less point to a concern that is highly relevant to certain segments of the student body. For instance, the fact that 10% of the students feel that we need to have improved sensitivity to the needs of non-traditional students, suggests that there may be, within that group, widely felt dissatisfaction.

Table 19: Three Most Important Things That Should Be Done To Improve The Drake Student Experience (Other than Academics): Percentages - 1997

Steps to Improve Drake Experience (non-Academic)	All Resp.	College					Yr in School			
		A&S	B&PA	Educ	JMC	P&HS	FY	So	Jun	Sr
Build school Spirit	51	50	53	50	54	48	47	54	52	51
Real Student Union	49	47	49	38	57	51	43	50	48	53
De-emphasize Greek life	35	36	28	37	38	35	32	34	38	33
Improve food	31	33	32	29	27	29	45	36	27	18
More on-campus activities	31	33	27	30	33	29	33	34	31	26
Improve res. halls	23	25	28	20	17	21	30	25	21	18
More info about activities	18	17	20	18	12	21	14	13	20	24
Emphasize Greek system	14	13	14	16	19	12	14	17	13	13
Relax rules	14	14	14	22	16	9	16	15	13	13
More activities	12	11	10	13	14	13	16	10	12	9
Sensitive to non-Traditional Students	10	8	12	11	4	14	2	3	12	18
Other	7	8	5	5	6	9	4	3	8	13

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS: The 1997 DSS SURVEY

Analysis of the Drake Student Survey results for the 1996-97 academic year suggest that students continue to have a relatively positive perception of their experience at Drake University. The 1997 respondents were more representative of the undergraduate student body than has been any other respondent group. In summary:

- Students most often report academics to be the best part of the Drake experience. This is followed in frequency by reports of friends and relationships as the best part of the experience.
- Managing time, following by adjusting to academics and balancing roles continue to be most frequently reported as difficult adjustments faced in college.
- As in previous years, "expense" is by far the most frequently reported complaint about the Drake experience.
- Seventy-five percent or more of the respondents agree with positive statements about how Drake and their major are helping them prepare for careers, about opportunities for interaction, development of leadership skills and involvement on campus, that Drake is preparing them for life-long learning, and that Drake fosters a respect for intellectual honesty.
- Over 70% of the respondents are satisfied with the quality of classes, their experience with faculty and with the overall experience. The percentage satisfied with Drake services is somewhat lower.
- When asked about the characteristics of a good class, students most often selected relevant material, caring professors and knowledgeable professors.
- When asked about faculty, more than three-quarters of the respondents agreed that faculty are approachable, that they are satisfied with opportunity for personal interaction with faculty, that professors are enthusiastic, and caring, and that they are satisfied with their academic advisor.
- Seventy-four percent or more of the respondents agree that their classes have been challenging, that they are satisfied with the quality of their major and with the education they are receiving in their major, and that their classes provide opportunity for open exchange of ideas.
- More than 80% of the respondents expressed satisfaction with access to computers. Levels of satisfaction with other academic services were lower, ranging down to 44% satisfaction with the Student Development and Learning Center among those who had experience with the center.
- More than 90% of the students (including first-year students) indicated that their general knowledge and knowledge in their major field were stronger or much stronger than when they entered Drake. More than three-quarters of the respondents reported such gains in their ability to think critically, in computer skills and understanding, and in analytical and problem solving skills.
- When asked about what should be done to improve the Drake academic experience, the consensus was lower than for other items. Forth-seven percent of the students reported a need for more interesting courses. Other items were selected by 35% or less of the respondents.

- Three-quarters or more of the students reported having gained strength in interpersonal skills and in their ability to identify their strengths and weaknesses.
- Sixty percent or more of the respondents indicated that they were stronger or much stronger in their acceptance of different beliefs, knowledge of races and cultures and in their relationships with persons of different races and cultures since coming to Drake. Less than half of the students are satisfied with the gender and racial/ethnic diversity of students. More than half of the respondents are satisfied with gender diversity among faculty, while less than half are satisfied with racial and ethnic diversity of faculty.
- Relatively small proportions of the respondents report hearing disparaging remarks about various groups from faculty and staff. However, more than 50% of the respondents report hearing disparaging comments about gay, lesbian & bisexuals, women and racial and ethnic minorities by other students.
- When asked about social and student services, half or more of the students expressed satisfaction with the Bell Center, Student Life Center, International Center, Residential Life Office, the residence halls and with campus religious organizations.
- More than half of the respondent indicated satisfaction with the cashier's office and with the D-Shoppe Book Store.
- When asked about student activities, more than half of the respondents indicated satisfaction with Fine Arts productions, intramural programming, and intercollegiate athletics.
- When asked about steps that would improve the non-academic aspects of the Drake experience, only one issue garnered support of more than 50% of the students. Fifty-one percent of the respondents selected the need to "build school spirit" while 49% selected provide a "real student union".