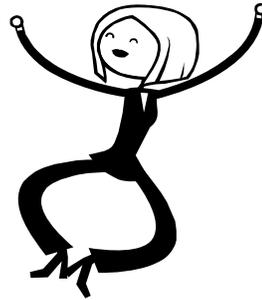


## It has been awhile, but Perspective Is Back!!!

The Division of Students Affairs Office of Research and Evaluation was established in 2002. The purpose of this office was to coordinate research and assessment within the division. As a part of that work, the OSU Perspective was published in order to communicate more widely the results of that work. Unfortunately as the demands for information increased, the OSU Perspective was "missing in action" for awhile. With new assessments and reports being done daily, OSU Perspective

was moved to the back burner. Fortunately, Dr. Larry Roper, Vice Provost for Student Affairs, was able to fund a Student Affairs assistant position. The assistant, Joakina Modé, is a recent OSU graduate and is working within Student Affairs departments to increase her knowledge of the field and to help out where needed. As a result, the OSU Perspective is back with new features and updates. Please join all of us in Research and Evaluation in thanking Joakina for get-

ting the OSU Perspective "back in action!"



We Are Back  
In Action

### In This Issue

- **Perspective is Back**
- **Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership**
- **Student Voice: A New Assessment Tool and Management Software**
- **National Survey of Student Engagement**
- **Thoughts on Assessment**

## Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership at OSU

**"A good leader inspires others with confidence in him; a great leader inspires them with confidence in themselves."**

—Unknown

OSU participated in the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MLS) in order to better understand the leadership development of students. The University of Maryland—College Park sponsored the project and selected and 54 institutions to participate in the initial study.

OSU chose to participate in this study not only to add to the national effort of understanding college student leadership development, but also to examine OSU student lead-

ership development with a random sample of OSU students and a comparative sample of identified student leaders at OSU.

The MLS was administered entirely on the web; University of Maryland was responsible for conducting the study and processing all of the results. OSU received the raw data for the OSU random sample and the OSU comparator sample as well as comparisons made on specific key demographic and environmental variables thought to impact the eight values/constructs of the social

change model (consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, citizenship, and change).

The response rate nationally, was 38%. OSU's response rate for the random sample was 30% (N = 982) while the response rate for the comparator sample was 49% (N = 243).

(Continued on page 3)

## **StudentVoice: A New Assessment Tool and Management System in Student Affairs**

As of January 1, 2008 the Division of Student Affairs invested in new software and tools to further the work of assessment of student learning in the Division.

StudentVoice, the provider, was developed to help better organize and assess data from campuses around the country. One of their focal points is making data understandable and easy to access by faculty and staff. They have implemented new strategies to accomplish this goal.

Within the division, two components of StudentVoice are in use, the Project component and the Management component. The Project component allows users to design and implement assessment projects, access results, and connect all of that to an assessment plan contained in the Management component. The Management component also allows units to connect their assessment plans, information, and results to the larger goals of the Division.

These services are not the only StudentVoice strong point. StudentVoice assists departments in developing departmental goals, effective questions for surveys or data collection, as well as scheduling and aligning assessment opportunities.

As the Assistant Director of Summer Sessions, Rick DeBellis has had experience with StudentVoice tools and technology. DeBellis has been at Oregon State University for ten years. In 1998 he was a grad student, but became an employee in the year 2000. His first experience with StudentVoice was at a conference where he used a palm pilot to complete a survey. This technology is now available to all personnel in the Division of Student Affairs.

For a little over a year now, DeBellis has worked with several StudentVoice tools. He was the data bank editor of an organization and conducted surveys with other organizations within his position. Last summer he used StudentVoice services to survey students enrolled in sum-



mer courses. A survey was sent to StudentVoice electronically and within three hours the questions were adjusted to provide better responses. The survey was then sent to students. "It is amazing how quickly you can get information back," he explains. DeBellis further explains how flexible StudentVoice is: "they have web access tools, palm pilots, all of which make the process of surveying very easy. They are also flexible about how you use their survey capacity."

DeBellis explained that StudentVoice provides several tools that allow surveys to be understandable, and enables accurate results. Their website states that "StudentVoice provides a range of methods to enable ongoing assessments, utilizing the most advanced mobile and web technologies." Toolkits which are resources on their web site are department specific structured approaches to assessments. Focusing on the important areas for each department, toolkits provide the ability to compare results to peer institutions, ask campus-specific questions to aid in addressing particular concerns or issues, and allow ongoing evaluation.

StudentVoice also provides web seminars that are open to anyone at OSU. Notices of these educational opportunities are available on the StudentVoice website. Use of their services can make a once daunting task much easier. Having data behind a decision is useful, which is one of the benefits of using StudentVoice. Departments are better able to make data driven decisions and therefore better

## **National Survey of Student Engagement 2007**

For several years OSU has administered the National Survey of Student Engagement to university first year students and senior students. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) was designed to measure if and how students were engaged in educationally purposeful activities which were empirically derived from good educational practices. NSSE further developed benchmarks which included: Level of Academic Challenge, Enriching Educational Experiences, Student Faculty Interactions, Supportive Campus Environment, and Active and Collaborative Learning.

The NSSE was first presented to college campuses in 2000. Oregon State has participated in the survey annually from 2002 to 2005. In 2007 OSU became involved with the survey once again to provide NSSE data to each OSU college that enrolled undergraduate students and which had a sufficient number of respondents.

Research on the NSSE has provided information on learning experiences that were high impact experiences (i.e., those that lead to significant learning/engagement and which influence the learning and engagement in other areas as well).

Nationally, the high impact area for first year students involved learning communities. High impact areas for upper division students were mostly experiences that occurred outside of the formal classroom. These included research with faculty members, study abroad, culminating senior experiences, internships, practicum, field experiences, and clinical assignments.

(Continued on Page 3)

**Multi-Institutional Leadership Study** (Continued from Page 1)

**Selected Results of the MLS**

The following highlights are from the questions that OSU added to the standard survey and pertain only to OSU students. Students were either in the random sample of undergraduates or in the comparative sample which only included identified student leaders.

◆ Students in the random sample reported that their social group and organized clubs and groups had the most influence on their personal leadership development. The identified student leader sample reported that OSU organized clubs and groups and OSU employment had the most influence on their personal leadership development.

- ◆ The random sample of students reported that the three most important things that they had learned from their involvement in student organizations were effective communication, teamwork, and people skills. The identified student leader sample reported likewise.
- ◆ The two groups were asked what more they wished they had learned from their involvement in student organizations or clubs. Both groups reported that they wished they had learned more business/technical skills and more healthy living skills.
- ◆ The four most selected items in terms of the student's motivation to participate in student

organizations/clubs was the same for both groups:

- Someone invited me
- Wanted to make a difference
- Wanted to be with people similar to me
- Wanted to acquire or develop a skill

◆ "Didn't fit my schedule" was most frequently reported as the reason for not becoming involved in a student group/club.

**For Further Reading**

The complete MLS report can be found online at:

<http://oregonstate.edu/studentaffairs/docs/MLSreport.pdf>

**National Survey of Student Engagement 2007** (Continued from Page 2)

Thirteen percent of Oregon State students reported that they had participated in a learning community. Likewise only a small percentage of OSU seniors reported participating in the high impact areas of research with faculty, study abroad, culminating senior experience and internship/work experiences. Additionally, culminating senior experiences and internship/field experiences were the two lowest performing areas for OSU senior students in terms of their participation in comparison to other Carnegie peers.

Although research with faculty was a high impact area, first year students and senior students reported significantly less work on research projects with faculty members than did students in their comparison groups. OSU may want to increasingly leverage its strength in the area of research to enhance student engagement.

The figure in the next column displays first-year student perceptions of relationships with faculty.

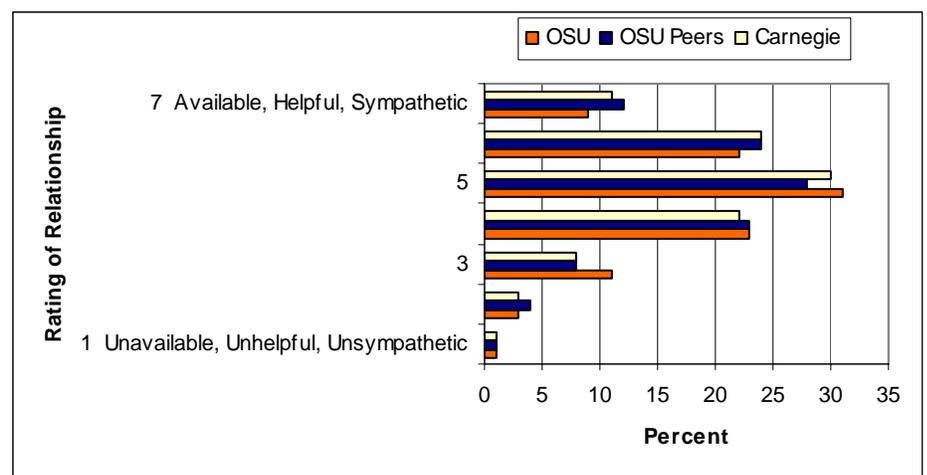
Successful student-faculty interactions are the single most influential factors in student motivation and persistence. Faculty become role models, mentors and guides. Students learn directly how to solve problems and how to be continuous learners from their interactions with faculty. Further, because the influence of faculty does play such a

critical role in students' lives, increasing positive student-faculty relationships is valuable.

**For further reading**

Contact Rebecca Sanderson for information on the OSU results on the 2007 National Survey of Student Engagement.

**Figure 1: FY Student Reported Rating of Relationship with Faculty**



## Thoughts on Assessment

### OSU Perspective:

#### What is it?

The **OSU Perspective** was developed to provide assessment and other information about our students and programs. We hope that by making this information available to OSU faculty and staff, we can stimulate conversation that helps keep students and student learning at our core.

The **Perspective** is published both in print and on the web: <http://oregonstate.edu/studentaffairs/assessment/index.html>

Ideas and suggestions for subsequent **OSU Perspective** publications are welcomed.

Please contact Rebecca Sanderson, Ph.D., Student Affairs Research and Evaluation Office, 102 Buxton Hall, 541-737-8738, or email: [rebecca.sanderson@oregonstate.edu](mailto:rebecca.sanderson@oregonstate.edu).

Masthead designed by Judy Burks, OSU College of Science.

This issue written and developed by Joakina Mode', Student Affairs Assistant.

Often times assessment is thought of as a cumbersome task that is a lot of work for little return. The following article provides some different perspectives on assessment and the benefits to Student Affairs departments.

Jodi Nelson, the Student Affairs assessment coordinator for the Office of the Vice Provost, and Lisa Hoogesteger, the Associate Director for Programs and Marketing in Recreational Sports, have worked on assessment of student learning in their respective departments and understand its importance. Nelson has worked at the University for over 20 years and was first introduced to assessment when she became a member of the Student Affairs Assessment Council. Hoogesteger has been with the University for 12 years and was introduced to assessment when she did program evaluations.

Currently, Nelson is working on assessing student learning in "Understanding Diversity through Service and Coalition Building," an ALS 199 one-credit course. This course began in 2005 and has as its goal: To provide a learning opportunity that engages students in a service learning project, issues of social justice, and self reflection. Issues range from racism, to socio-economic status, to mental health issues, and ethnic identities. The fundamental goal of the class is to offer an experiential learning opportunity that addresses societal issues. Students write reflection papers and their learning outcomes are assessed. Nelson feels that "assessment may seem like a daunting task, but it really helps faculty and staff better serve their students." She also urges people not to be afraid of assessment, "it may seem like a hard task, but really it is the most effective way of knowing

your students needs and what they are learning."

Hoogesteger focuses on the practical use of assessment and learning outcomes. "Its practical piece has helped in figuring out when to schedule open recreation, use patterns, equipment that needs to be purchased and so on" Hoogesteger explains. Assessment helps Rec Sports know how they can better serve students and how to better prepare for events.

Dixon Recreational Center has been a part of nationwide learning outcomes and benchmarking. An assessment measured the safety levels of the different recreation centers on college campuses. Hoogesteger says that "this enables the department to measure levels of satisfaction with safety environment in comparison to other schools." Dixon scored an 80 percent in safety, while most other schools scored a 70. She further explains that "the learning outcomes only help us to work as a better facility for students and staff."

Both Jodi Nelson and Lisa Hoogesteger feel that the work of assessment is important, and needs to be done. Hoogesteger encourages staff and faculty to engage in a process of reflection using data that is systematically collected. Assessment can be ". . . fun, and you learn new things." "If there is something that you are curious about, assessment is a great way to get that answer." It also helps us to focus so that we are all pulling in the same direction-even though the issues may be different for each unit in Rec Sports.

