

The Student-Satisfaction Inventory

Interpretive Guide

The Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) is the original survey instrument in the Noel-Levitz Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys. It is primarily for traditional-aged students in undergraduate programs, although some institutions also administer it to their graduate-level students. The SSI gives the institution an opportunity to take the pulse of the student body to determine what matters to students and how satisfied the students are. With this information, colleges and universities can target areas most in need of improvement in order to retain students. The SSI asks students to respond with a level of importance and a level of satisfaction. A performance gap is calculated by subtracting the satisfaction score from the importance score.

Versions of the SSI

The Student Satisfaction Inventory is available in the following versions:

Four-year College and University Version

- Form A is the original version
- Form B is the shorter version
- Note that national comparisons are available separately for private and public four-year institutions.

Two-year Community, Junior, and Technical College Version

- Form A is the original version
- Form B is the shorter version

Two-year Career and Private School Version

- Form A is the original version
- Form B is the shorter version

Canadian Four-year College and University Version

- Form A is the original version

Canadian Two-year CEGEP, Community, and Technical College Version

- Form A is the original version

Item Structure on the SSI

Number of items rated for importance and satisfaction varies by version:

- Four-year Form A: 73 items
- Four-year Form B: 45 items
- Two-year Community College Form A: 70 items
- Two-year Community College Form B: 40 items
- Two-year Career and Private Schools Form A: 70 items
- Two-year Career and Private Schools Form B: 40 items
- Canadian Four-Year Form A: 73 items
- Canadian Two-Year Form A: 70 items

Each of the survey versions include 10 optional items which may be defined by the institution and rated for importance and satisfaction.

The Form A version of the surveys includes six items that assess the institution's commitment to specific student populations. These items are rated for satisfaction only and do not include importance or performance gap scores. These items contribute to the Responsiveness to Diverse Populations Scale.

The surveys also capture student perceptions on eight or nine enrollment factors with an importance score only.

In addition, the surveys ask students to respond to three summary items (met expectations, overall satisfaction and likelihood to re-enroll). There are also standard demographic items and campus-defined demographic items on each version.

The Scales

The items on the SSI have been analyzed statistically and conceptually to form comprehensive scales. Note that some items appear on more than one scale. The number and list of scales for each version is as follows. A description of the scales follows.

Four-year Form A: 12 scales

- Academic Advising Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Life
- Campus Support Services
- Concern for the Individual
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
- Safety and Security
- Service Excellence
- Student Centeredness
- Items not on a scale: 35 and 72

Four-year Form B: 9 scales

- Academic Advising Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Life
- Campus Support Services
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Safety and Security
- Student Centeredness

**Two-year Community College Form A:
12 scales**

- Academic Advising and Counseling Effectiveness
- Academic Services
- Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Support Services
- Concern for the Individual
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
- Safety and Security
- Service Excellence
- Student Centeredness
- Items not on a scale: 3, 9, 53, and 68

**Two-year Community College Form B:
8 scales**

- Academic Advising and Counseling Effectiveness
- Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Services
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Safety and Security
- Student Centeredness

**Two-year Career and Private Schools Form A:
12 scales**

- Academic Advising and Counseling Effectiveness
- Academic Services
- Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Support Services
- Concern for the Individual
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
- Safety and Security
- Service Excellence- Student Centeredness
- Items not on a scale: 3, 9, 53, and 68

**Two-year Career and Private Schools Form B:
8 scales**

- Academic Advising and Counseling Effectiveness
- Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Services
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Safety and Security
- Student Centeredness

Canadian Four-year Form A: 12 scales

- Academic Advising Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Life
- Campus Support Services
- Concern for the Individual
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
- Safety and Security
- Service Excellence
- Student Centeredness
- Items not on a scale: 35 and 72

Canadian Two-year Form A: 12 scales

- Academic Advising and Counseling Effectiveness
- Academic Services
- Admissions and Financial Aid Effectiveness
- Campus Climate
- Campus Support Services
- Concern for the Individual
- Instructional Effectiveness
- Registration Effectiveness
- Responsiveness to Diverse Populations
- Safety and Security
- Service Excellence
- Student Centeredness
- Items not on a scale: 3, 9, 53, and 68

Description of Scales

Academic Advising (and Counseling) Effectiveness: assesses the comprehensiveness of your academic advising program. Academic advisors (and counselors) are evaluated on the basis of their knowledge, competence, and personal concern for student success, as well as on their approachability.

Academic Services: assesses services students utilize to achieve their academic goals. These services include the library, computer labs, tutoring, and study areas.

Campus Climate: assesses the extent to which your institution provides experiences that promote a sense of campus pride and feelings of belonging. This scale also assess the effectiveness of your institution's channels of communication for students.

Campus Life: assesses the effectiveness of student life programs offered by your institution, covering issues ranging from athletics to residence life. This scale also assesses campus policies and procedures to determine students' perception of their rights and responsibilities.

Campus Services: (similar to Academic Services) assess services students utilize to achieve their academic goals. These services include the library, computer labs, tutoring, and study areas.

Campus Support Services: assess the quality of your support programs and services which students utilize to make their educational experiences more meaningful and productive. This scale covers a variety of areas.

Concern for the Individual: assesses your institution's commitment to treating each student as an individual. Those groups who frequently deal with students on a personal level (e.g., faculty, advisors, etc.) are included in this assessment.

Instructional Effectiveness: assesses your students' academic experience, the curriculum, and the campus's overriding commitment to academic excellence. This comprehensive scale covers areas such as the effectiveness of your faculty in and out of the classroom, content of the courses, and sufficient course offerings.

Recruitment (or Admissions) and Financial Aid Effectiveness: assesses your institution's ability to enroll students in an effective manner. This scale covers issues such as competence and knowledge of admissions counselors, as well as the effectiveness and availability of financial aid programs.

Registration Effectiveness: assesses issues associated with registration and billing. This scale also measures your institution's commitment to making this process as smooth and effective as possible.

Responsiveness to Diverse Populations: assesses your institution's commitment to specific groups of students enrolled at your institution, e.g., under-represented populations; students with disabilities; commuters; part-time students; and older, returning learners.

Safety and Security: assesses your institution's responsiveness to students' personal safety and security on your campus. This scale measures the effectiveness of both security personnel and campus facilities.

Service Excellence: assesses the perceived attitude of your staff, especially front-line staff, toward students. This scale pinpoints the areas of your campus where quality service and personal concern for students are rated most and least favorably.

Student Centeredness: assesses your campus's efforts to convey to students that they are important to your institution. This scale measures the extent to which students feel welcome and valued.

The items which contribute to each scale can be reviewed within your campus report. The HTML electronic report includes the items within the scales on the scale report; when you select the scale name it will expand to show the items. In the paper report, there is a section which provides the scales alphabetically and the list of items within the scale.

Reliability and Validity—Form A

The Student Satisfaction Inventory is a very reliable instrument. Both the two-year and four-year versions of the SSI show exceptionally high internal reliability. Cronbach's coefficient alpha is .97 for the set of importance scores and is .98 for the set of satisfaction scores. It also demonstrates good score reliability over time; the three-week, test-retest reliability coefficient is .85 for importance scores and .84 for satisfaction scores.

There is also evidence to support the validity of the Student Satisfaction Inventory. Convergent validity was assessed by correlating satisfaction scores from the SSI with satisfaction scores from the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSSQ), another statistically reliable satisfaction instrument. The Pearson correlation between these two instruments ($r = .71$; $p < .00001$) is high enough to indicate that the SSI's satisfaction scores measure the same satisfaction construct as the CSSQ's scores, and yet the correlation is low enough to indicate that there are distinct differences between the two instruments.

Reliability and Validity—Form B

The reliability of the SSI Form B was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha which tests how well a collection of items agree with one another. The commonly accepted rule is that a value above .70 is acceptable as proof of reliability. In the analysis, all values but two are above .70. Even those two are extremely close to .70. In all cases, factor analysis was performed among scale items to determine if there was any multidimensionality. None was detected, further proof that items within each scale are measuring like concepts.

Due to the absence of another instrument to compare to the SSI Form B, validity was measured by checking the correlation between the individual scales and the SSI Form B question regarding overall satisfaction. All correlations were positive and significant at the .01 level, an indication that each of the scales are associated with overall satisfaction.

The Inventory Authors

The Student Satisfaction Inventory was developed by Laurie A. Schreiner, Ph.D., and Stephanie L. Juillerat, Ph.D., with assistance from Noel-Levitz. Dr. Schreiner is Chair of Doctoral Studies in Education, Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, California, and Dr. Juillerat is assistant professor, School of Education, Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, California. The Student Satisfaction Inventory was piloted in 1993 and became available in 1994. As of 2014 over 2,700 institutions and over 5.3 million students have completed the inventory.

A word about Noel-Levitz

A trusted partner to higher education, Noel-Levitz helps systems and campuses reach and exceed their goals for enrollment, marketing, and student success.

To help with goal attainment, our 50 full-time consultants and 60 part-time associates bring direct experience from their previous and current positions on campuses as consultants, enrollment managers, marketing leaders, retention directors, institutional researchers, financial aid directors, faculty, student affairs leaders, advising directors, and more.

Noel-Levitz has developed an array of proven tools including software programs, diagnostics tools and instruments, Web-based training programs, customized consultations, workshops, and national conferences. With the Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys, the firm brings together its many years of research and campus-based experience to enable you to get to the heart of your campus agenda.

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Contact us

Refer to the General Interpretive Guide or contact us for guidance on further interpretation of your results. For general questions about reviewing your results or to order materials for a future administration, please contact:

- Julie Bryant, Associate Vice President of Retention Solutions, julie-bryant@noellevitz.com
- Shannon Cook, Director of Retention Solutions, shannon-cook@noellevitz.com

You may also like to take advantage of an in-depth report discussion phone call at no charge or to explore opportunities to have a consultant come to campus to present your results (additional fees apply).

Visit the Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys Client Resource Site

This link is appropriate for all surveys in this survey family: www.noellevitz.com/SSIClient

Enter your e-mail address and log-in information.

(Note: If you cannot remember your log-in information, please request your log-in be sent to you immediately, using the indicated link). If you are unable to access the client community, please contact Noel-Levitz.

Resources include

- National group demographic details and lists of participating institutions;
- Links to the current National Satisfaction and Priorities Report;
- Details on upcoming client events;
- Recent presentations on satisfaction assessment topics;
- And more...