

# Research Brief

A publication from Rowan University's **Office of Institutional Research and Planning**  
to provide targeted information to the Rowan community

May 2003

Volume FY 2003: Brief 5

## Student Satisfaction at Rowan University

Undergraduate students who were enrolled during the spring 2003 term were invited to participate in the national Noel-Levitz survey, *Student Satisfaction Inventory* (SSI). This is the third administration of the *SSI*. The first was during the of spring 1995 and the second was during the spring of 1998.

This Research Brief is the first of a series of findings from this survey administration. This report will focus on what is important to Rowan students and how satisfied these students are with various dimensions of campus life. Future reports will compare changes in satisfaction over time and differences in perceptions by student affiliation (admit type and class level).

Highlights of the preliminary findings are:

- Students are more satisfied with their Rowan experience than students who attend other four-year public institutions in the Eastern United States on ten of eleven scales
- The only scale on which Rowan students reported less satisfaction than their peers was the scale labeled "Safety and Security" (driven by the scale item related to parking)
- Rowan students perceive all eleven SSI dimensions as being very important (scoring 5 or higher on a 7-point scale)

### What is the Student Satisfaction Inventory?

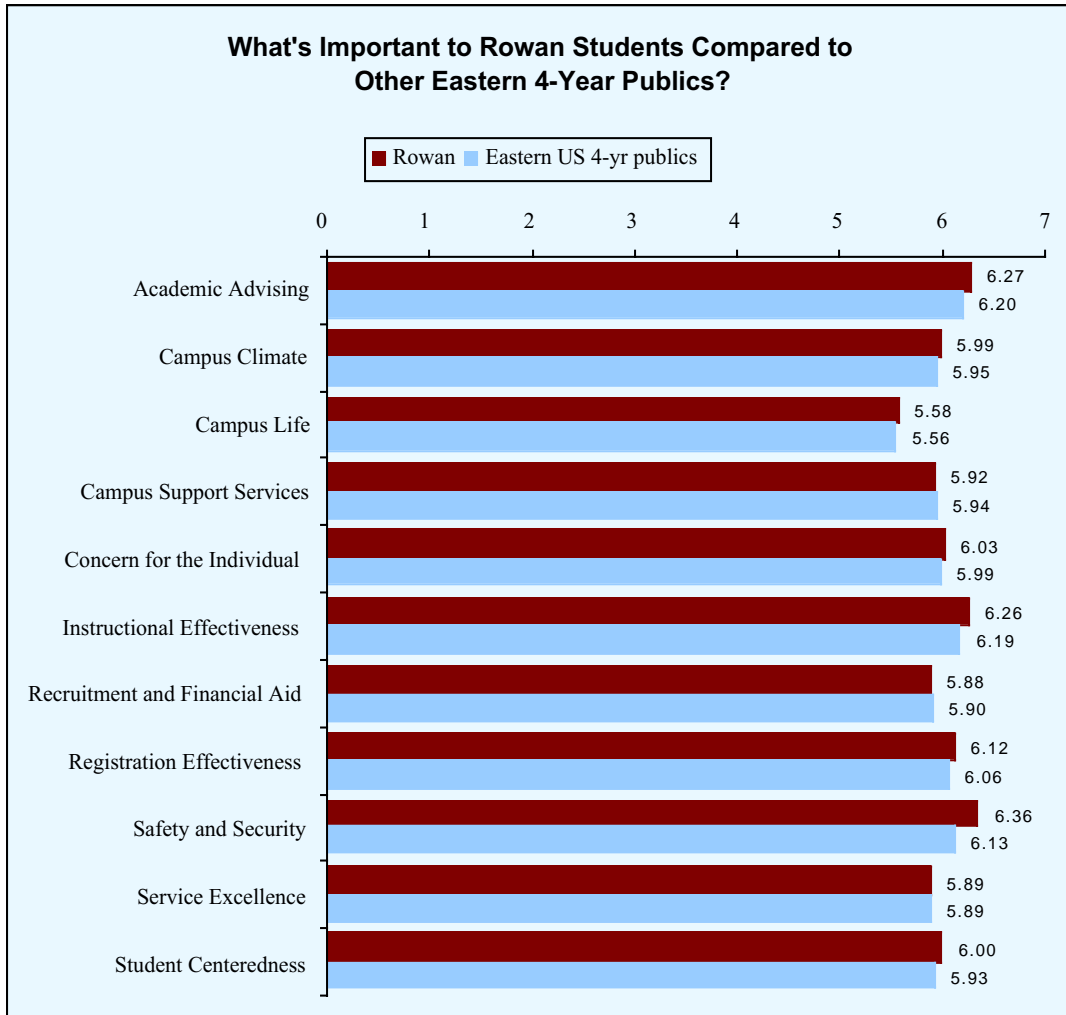
The *SSI* is a survey consisting of 98 items regarding many experiences of college life.<sup>1</sup> Students rate these 98 items in the inventory by the importance of the specific expectation as well as their satisfaction with how well that expectation is being met. These items are statistically and conceptually grouped into eleven composite scales that offer a more global perspective of students' responses. These scales provide a good overview of institutional strengths and areas in need of improvement.

### Who Participated in the SSI: A description of the sample

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning identified a random sample of 111 class sections and invited the faculty of those classes to distribute the *SSI* to their classes. Just over 70% of these faculty responded to the invitation and 1,855 *SSI* instruments were distributed. Sixty percent (60.27%) were completed and returned to IRP. The 1,118 students who completed the *SSI* form a representative sample of the Rowan undergraduate population along these dimensions: class level (freshman, sophomore, junior and senior) and admit type (native Rowan student, transfer student)

<sup>1</sup> Adopted from Campus Report, Rowan University, 2003, Student Satisfaction Inventory, USA Group Noel-Levitz, Inc.

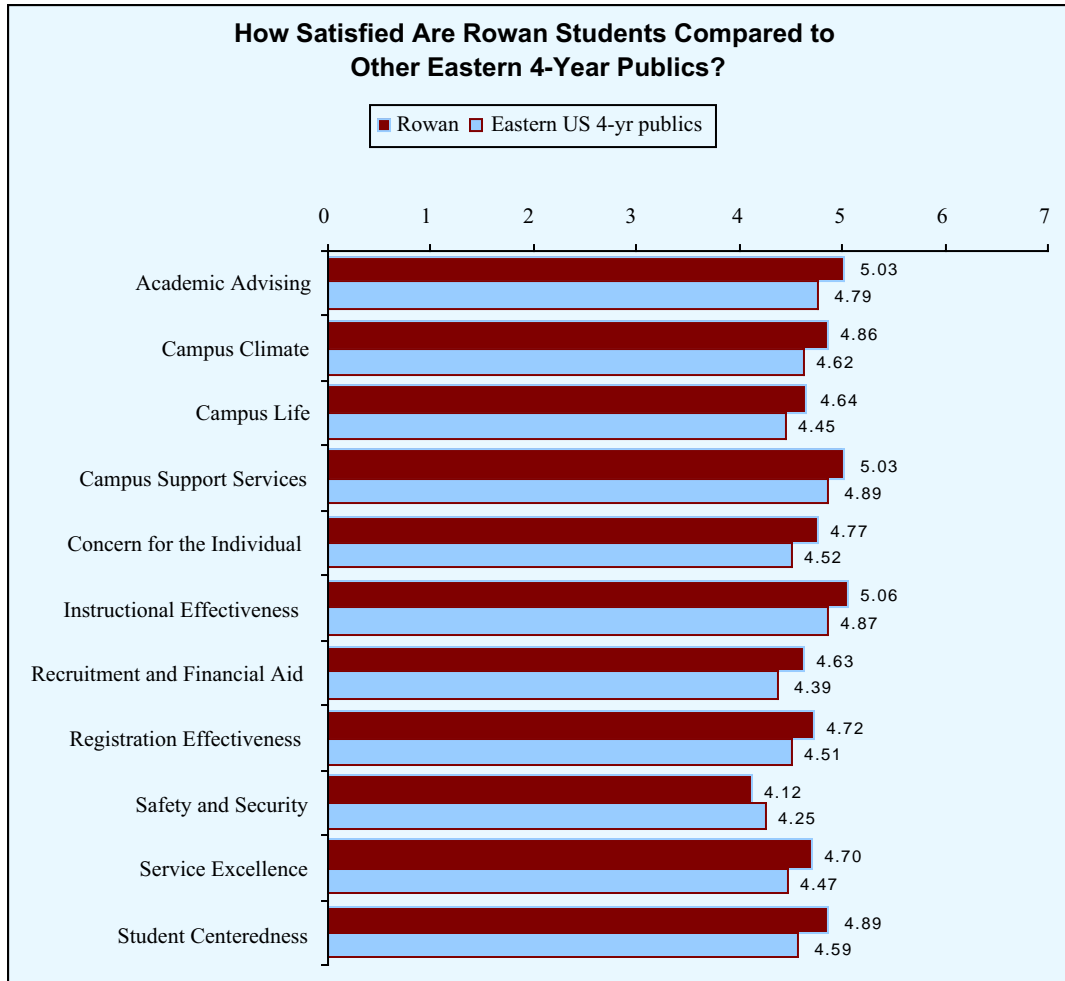
## What's Important to Rowan Students?



Rowan students' expectations for their college experience is very similar to students at other Eastern four-year public institutions. Our students mirror others in identifying what areas are most important to them: safety and security, academic advising and instructional effectiveness. These were the three most important dimensions of the college experience for both Rowan students and students at other four-year public institutions in the East.

SSI Scales in order of importance	Importance Rowan	Eastern US 4-yr publics	Rowan Rank	Eastern US Rank
Safety and Security	6.36	6.13	1	3
Academic Advising	6.27	6.20	2	1
Instructional Effectiveness	6.26	6.19	3	2
Registration Effectiveness	6.12	6.06	4	4
Concern for the Individual	6.03	5.99	5	5
Student Centeredness	6.00	5.93	6	8
Campus Climate	5.99	5.95	7	6
Campus Support Services	5.92	5.94	8	7
Service Excellence	5.89	5.89	9	10
Recruitment and Financial Aid	5.88	5.90	10	9
Campus Life	5.58	5.56	11	11

## How Satisfied Are Rowan Students?

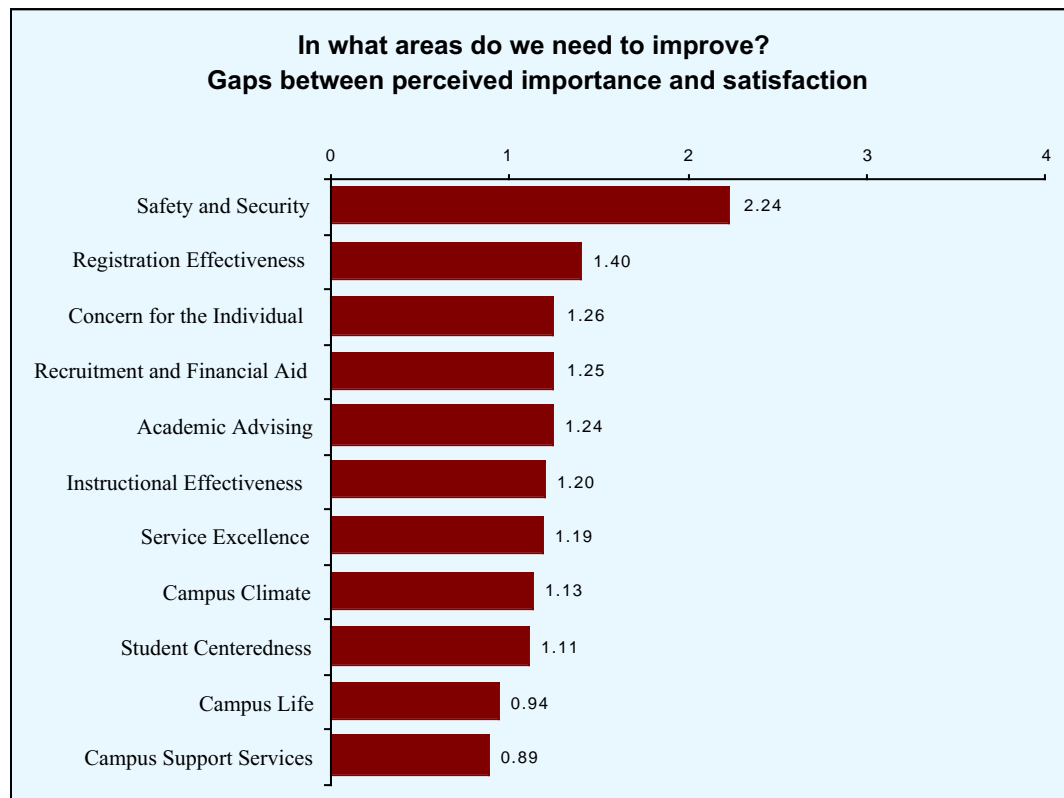


Not only do Rowan students rank similarly in importance those dimensions of college life that other students identify as being important, but also our students are satisfied with the same things as their colleagues. **More importantly, Rowan students are MORE satisfied with ten of these dimensions than students at other Eastern four-year public institutions.** On only one scale, safety and security, did Rowan students indicate less satisfaction than other students. (Note: the primary “driving” item of the safety and security scale is the item regarding satisfaction with available parking.)

SSI Scales in order of importance	Satisfaction Rowan	Eastern US 4-yr publics	Rowan Rank	Eastern US Rank
Instructional Effectiveness	5.06	4.87	1	2
Campus Support Services	5.03	4.89	2	1
Academic Advising	5.03	4.79	3	3
Student Centeredness	4.89	4.59	4	5
Campus Climate	4.86	4.62	5	4
Concern for the Individual	4.77	4.52	6	6
Registration Effectiveness	4.72	4.51	7	7
Service Excellence	4.70	4.47	8	8
Campus Life	4.64	4.45	9	9
Recruitment and Financial Aid	4.63	4.39	10	10
Safety and Security	4.12	4.25	11	11

Noel-Levitz built into the **SSI** a means by which colleges can identify priorities to improve those dimensions in which students express high expectations but are not satisfied with those areas. This mechanism is called the “performance gap.” A large performance gap score (e.g., greater than 2.0) would indicate that students rate this dimension of college life highly but their satisfaction in this area is low. The performance gap indicates an important dimension of college life with which students are not satisfied and in which there needs to be improvement. Only one scale on the SSI received a performance gap measure greater than 2.00: safety and security. Please refer to the note below.

NOTE: As with the other ten scales, each scale is comprised of various individual items. The item in the safety and security scale that drove the performance gap over 2.00 was the item, “The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.” This item received a performance gap score of 4.53. All the other item gap scores were less than 1.60.



For more information visit our web page at  
<http://www2.rowan.edu/open/irp>  
 Our listing is under Professional and Academic Service -  
 Institutional Research and Planning or contact us  
 at 256-4146

**Institutional Research and Planning  
 Rowan University  
 Bole Hall Annex  
 Glassboro, New Jersey 08028  
 (856) 256-4146**