

# **Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)**

Report on the Results of the Spring 2010 Administration  
of the SSI at Mesa Community College



PREPARED BY:  
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND PLANNING  
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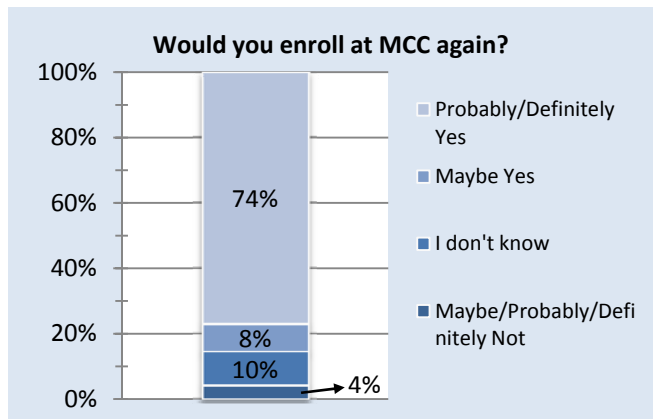
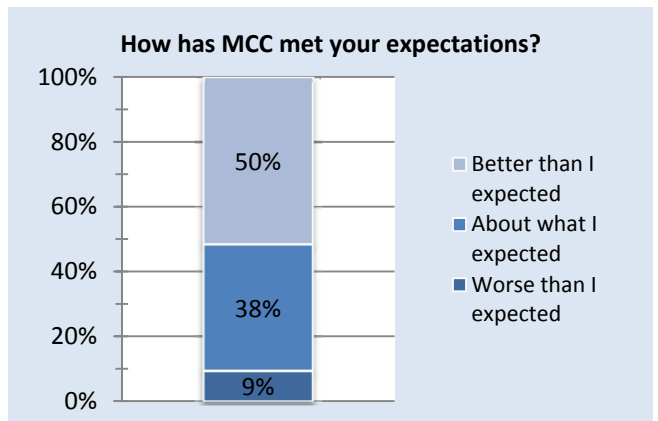
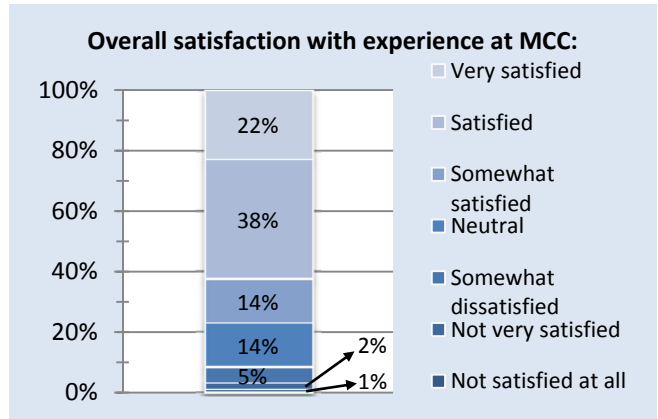
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# 1 Executive Summary

## Key Highlights

- Overall, MCC mean scores were similar to those of MCCCDC, but generally lower than those of national, western, and large community college cohorts.
- Out of 70 items, MCC mean satisfaction scores were lower by a statistically significant margin for:
  - 37 items (53%) compared to the national cohort
  - 34 items (49%) compared to the large cohort
  - 20 items (29%) compared to the western cohort
  - 8 items (11%) compared to the MCCCDC cohort
- MCC did score higher with statistical significance in 2 items (3%) compared to the western cohort.
- MCC students were most satisfied with being able to experience intellectual growth on campus, faculty knowledge, instructional quality, course variety and scheduling, library services, campus maintenance, and lab facilities. (See page 5 for a ranking of items by satisfaction score.)
- MCC students were least satisfied with the availability of student parking, communication between the college and students, knowledge and helpfulness of personnel in academic advising and financial aid, and getting the “run-around” on campus. (See page 5 for a ranking of items by satisfaction score.)
- The composite areas of Academic Advising/Counseling, Admissions and Financial Aid, and Safety and Security had the largest performance gap. The performance gap is the difference between the importance and satisfaction score; a large gap indicates the college may not be meeting student expectations for a given item.
- 69% of respondents said MCC was their first choice of colleges to attend; 23% said it was their second choice; 8% said it was their third or lower choice.
- Day and evening students were similarly satisfied with their overall experiences at the college. The areas with largest performance gaps were similar for both day and evening students, indicating the college is not meeting student expectations across both student types. (See page 18 for detailed scores of day and evening students.)

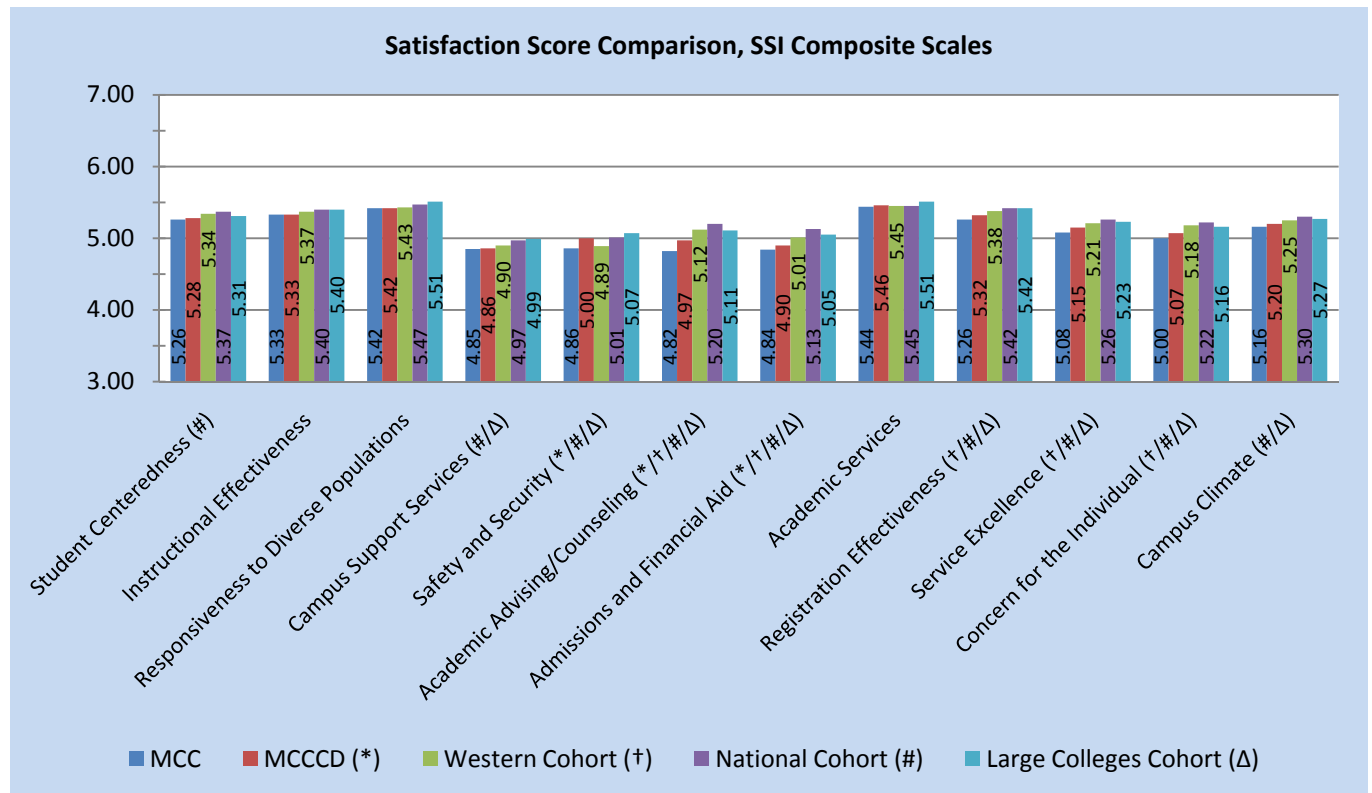
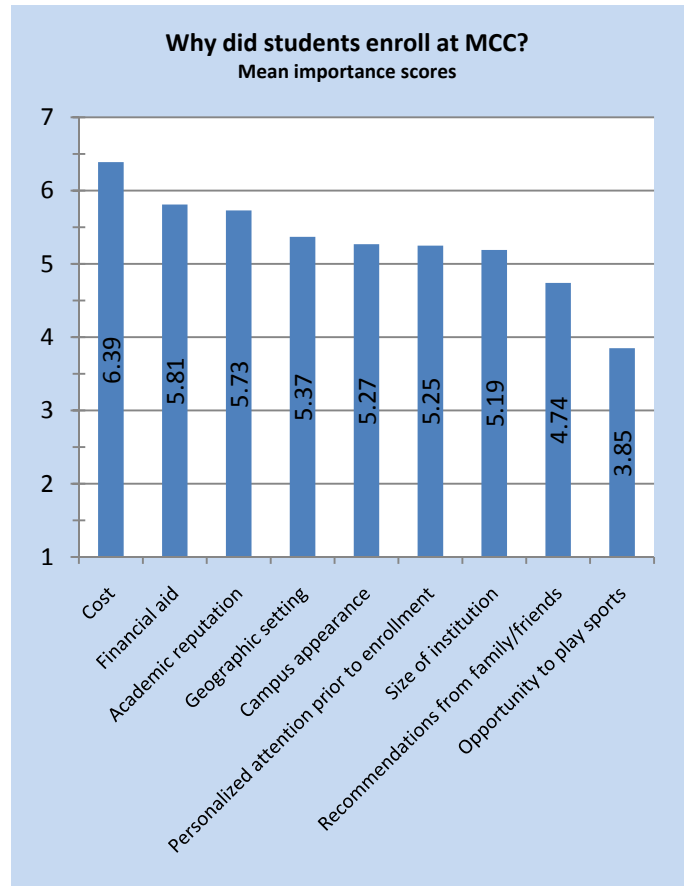


**What's Important to MCC Students?**  
Composite Areas Ranked by Importance Score

|    |                                |
|----|--------------------------------|
| 1  | Instructional Effectiveness    |
| 2  | Registration Effectiveness     |
| 3  | Academic Advising / Counseling |
| 4  | Academic Services              |
| 5  | Concern for the Individual     |
| 6  | Admissions and Financial Aid   |
| 7  | Safety and Security            |
| 8  | Student Centeredness           |
| 9  | Service Excellence             |
| 10 | Campus Climate                 |
| 11 | Campus Support Services        |

**Key Highlights Continued**

- Over two-thirds (70%) of Red Mountain students were either satisfied or very satisfied with their overall experience at the college. (See page 27 for detailed scores of Red Mountain students.)
- Cost, financial aid, and academic reputation were rated as the three most important reasons why students choose to enroll at MCC. (See chart to the right.)
- The chart below shows the overall mean satisfaction scores for each composite area. Scores higher than MCC by a statistically significant margin of at least .05 are indicated by symbols in parenthesis following the composite scale name.
  - MCC is on par with all other cohorts in areas of Instructional Effectiveness, Responsiveness to Diverse Populations, and Academic Services.
  - MCC scores are lower when compared to all four cohorts in areas of Academic Advising/Counseling and Admissions and Financial Aid.



Note: Symbols indicate statistically significant higher composite score when compared to MCC.

## Introduction

The Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) aims to “take the pulse of the student body” by asking students to rate their level of satisfaction and their perceived level of importance with specific experiences, departments, and interactions at the college. Additional survey questions asked about students’ overall experience at Mesa Community College (MCC) as well as demographic information. Items are grouped into composite scales to provide a broad overview of big-picture areas such as Instructional Effectiveness or Registration Effectiveness.

The spring 2010 semester marks the first administration of the SSI at MCC; it was completed by 466 of 680 students in 30 randomly selected classes at both the Southern and Dobson and Red Mountain campuses. The survey was also administered at all Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) colleges except Rio Salado and will be repeated on a three-year cycle. In addition to comparing MCC to MCCCD, results will be compared to three cohorts: national community colleges, western community colleges, and large community colleges<sup>1</sup>.

The SSI is one of two surveys administered on a regular cycle to a sample of MCC students. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was previously administered for the first time in 2008 and will be administered again in spring 2011. While the SSI directly questions students about their satisfaction with the college, CCSSE asks questions about student engagement, student behaviors, and institutional practices that are indicators of positive student success and retention. Further information about each survey is available from the MCC Office of Research and Planning.

Students used a Likert scale to rate items in two ways: “importance to me” and “my level of satisfaction.” Scales ranged from 1-7, with 7 as the highest (very important or very satisfied) and 1 as the lowest (not important at all or not satisfied at all). Mean scores are presented using this 1-7 scale format.

This report presents detailed SSI results:

- Overall MCC results by composite scale<sup>2</sup>
- MCC satisfaction scores compared to other cohorts
- MCC results for day and evening students
- MCC results by campus

## Methods

In-person credit classes were randomly selected from institutional class data files to participate in the survey. Excel was used to randomly generate and order numbers for each section. This list was followed in order until the target distribution goal was met. The overall student response rate was 68.5%. Based on the spring 2010 credit student headcount, results for the overall MCC cohort have a 95% confidence level with a  $\pm 4.5\%$  confidence interval (margin of error). Out of the entire MCC cohort, 267 students indicated primarily attending the Southern and Dobson campus, 127 indicated attending the Red Mountain campus, and 72 did not indicate a primary campus. This equates to a  $\pm 5.95\%$  and  $\pm 8.54\%$  margin of error for the respective campus cohorts with a 95% confidence level.

Faculty members were notified prior to administration of the survey of their random selection to participate. Course and section information was provided in this notice for verification purposes. Upon verification, survey

| What's Important to MCC Students? |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1                                 | Classes scheduled at convenient times.                |
| 2                                 | Cost as a factor to enroll.                           |
| 3                                 | Able to experience intellectual growth here.          |
| 4                                 | Quality of instruction in classes excellent.          |
| 5                                 | Good variety of courses provided on campus.           |
| 6                                 | I am able to register for classes with few conflicts. |
| 7                                 | Nearly all faculty are knowledgeable in their fields. |
| 8                                 | The campus is safe and secure for all students.       |
| 9                                 | Student parking space on campus is adequate.          |
| 10                                | Registration personnel are helpful.                   |

<sup>1</sup> The national and western community college cohorts are defined by Noel-Levitz. The MCC Office of Research and Planning requested additional comparisons to a cohort of large community colleges of a similar size to MCC. For cohort descriptions, see Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> Noel-Levitz groups most items into composite scales. For a detailed description of scales, see Appendix B.

materials were distributed the week prior to administration, and faculty were asked to administer the survey during MCC's Assessment Week. Department chairs promoted participation of faculty and disseminated survey notices, letters, and materials. Upon return of the surveys, they were prepared for scanning and shipped to Noel-Levitz for processing and analysis.

## Highlighted Results

### Strengths and Challenges

Items ranking above the median in the importance rating and in the top 25% of satisfaction ratings are defined as strengths. Items above the median score in the importance rating and either in the bottom 25% of satisfaction scores OR in the top 25 % of the performance gap rating are defined as challenges. The performance gap score is the difference between the overall importance and satisfaction rating for each item.

| Composite Area                 | Strengths  | Challenges   |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Instructional Effectiveness    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am able to experience intellectual growth here.</li> <li>The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent.</li> <li>There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.</li> <li>Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields.</li> <li>Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class.</li> </ul>   |
| Academic Services              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Library resources and services are adequate.</li> <li>Computer labs are adequate and accessible.</li> <li>The equipment in lab facilities is kept up to date.</li> </ul>  |  |
| Campus Climate                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.</li> <li>The institution has a good reputation within the community.</li> </ul>   |  |
| Registration Effectiveness     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.</li> <li>There are convenient ways of paying my school bill.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The personnel involved in registration are helpful.</li> </ul>  |
| Student Centeredness           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.</li> </ul>  |  |
| Safety and Security            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The campus is safe and secure for all students.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.</li> <li>Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.</li> </ul>  |
| Admissions and Financial Aid   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admissions staff is knowledgeable.</li> <li>Adequate financial aid is available for most students.</li> <li>Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning.</li> <li>Financial aid counselors are helpful.</li> </ul> |
| Academic Advising / Counseling |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements.</li> <li>My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the transfer requirements of other schools.</li> <li>My academic advisor is approachable.</li> </ul>                                    |

### Item Rankings

The following tables list the top and bottom ten items by the mean satisfaction, importance, and performance gap scores. The gap score gives an indication of whether the college is meeting students' expectations for each item. The higher the gap, the more distance between how important students feel an item is and their satisfaction with that item. Overall, MCC students were most satisfied with items in the composite areas of Academic Services, Responsiveness to Diverse Populations, Instructional Effectiveness, and Student Centeredness.

#### Satisfaction

Scale: 1 (not important/satisfied at all) – 4 (neutral) – 7 (very important/satisfied)

|  | Item  | Satisfaction | Importance | Gap               |
|--|---|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| ↑<br>Top 10  | 70. I am able to experience intellectual growth here.   | 5.76         | 6.32       | 0.56              |
|  | 68. On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.  | 5.66         | 6.08       | 0.42              |
|  | 69. There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.                               | 5.65         | 6.31       | 0.66              |
|  | 14. Library resources and services are adequate.  | 5.64         | 6.15       | 0.51              |
|  | 58. Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields.                              | 5.64         | 6.25       | 0.61              |
|  | 18. The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent.                  | 5.57         | 6.31       | 0.74              |
|  | 8. Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.                                 | 5.55         | 6.43       | 0.88              |
|  | 45. This institution has a good reputation within the community.                              | 5.55         | 5.97       | 0.42              |
|  | 26. Library staff are helpful and approachable.   | 5.54         | 5.94       | 0.40              |
|  | 42. The equipment in the lab facilities is kept up to date.                                   | 5.53         | 6.05       | 0.52              |
| ↓<br>Bottom 10   | 39. The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.                                | 4.27         | 6.21       | 1.94              |
|  | 13. Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning. | 4.49         | 5.97       | 1.48              |
|  | 25. My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.                       | 4.56         | 5.92       | 1.36              |
|  | 17. Personnel in the Veterans' Services program are helpful.                                  | 4.58         | 4.59       | 0.01 <sup>3</sup> |
|  | 10. Child care facilities are available on campus.  | 4.59         | 4.33       | -.26 <sup>3</sup> |
|  | 12. My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward.                                    | 4.66         | 5.89       | 1.23              |
|  | 65. Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class.              | 4.67         | 6.11       | 1.44              |
|  | 19. This campus provides effective support services for displaced homemakers.                 | 4.70         | 4.85       | 0.15 <sup>3</sup> |
|  | 63. I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus.                    | 4.71         | 5.95       | 1.24              |
|  | 44. I generally know what's happening on campus.  | 4.71         | 5.36       | 0.65              |
| 9. Internships or practical experiences are provided in my degree/certificate program. | 4.71  | 5.75         | 1.04       |                   |

#### Importance

Scale: 1 (not important/satisfied at all) – 4 (neutral) – 7 (very important/satisfied)

|             | Item   | Importance | Satisfaction | Gap  |
|-------------|--|------------|--------------|------|
| ↑<br>Top 10 | 8. Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me.                | 6.43       | 5.55         | 0.88 |
|             | 70. I am able to experience intellectual growth here.                        | 6.32       | 5.76         | 0.56 |
|             | 69. There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.              | 6.31       | 5.65         | 0.66 |
|             | 18. The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent. | 6.31       | 5.57         | 0.74 |
|             | 15. I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.             | 6.30       | 5.31         | 0.99 |
|             | 58. Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields.             | 6.25       | 5.64         | 0.61 |
|             | 31. The campus is safe and secure for all students.                          | 6.24       | 5.50         | 0.74 |
|             | 39. The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.               | 6.21       | 4.27         | 1.94 |
|             | 5. The personnel involved in registration are helpful.                       | 6.17       | 5.03         | 1.14 |
|             | 14. Library resources and services are adequate.                             | 6.15       | 5.64         | 0.51 |

<sup>3</sup> An item may have lower mean scores in both importance and satisfaction while also having a low gap score. This likely indicates that while the item is not as important to the student body as a whole, it seems to be meeting the needs of students who do feel that the item is important. Items 17, 10 and 19 are examples of this.

**Importance continued**

|                  | Item  | Importance  | Satisfaction | Gap   |
|------------------|---|-------------|--------------|-------|
| <b>Bottom 10</b> | 10. Child care facilities are available on campus.                                      | <b>4.33</b> | 4.59         | -0.26 |
|                  | 17. Personnel in the Veterans' Services program are helpful.                            | <b>4.59</b> | 4.58         | 0.01  |
|                  | 19. This campus provides effective support services for displaced homemakers.           | <b>4.85</b> | 4.70         | 0.15  |
|                  | 4. Security staff are helpful.  | <b>5.25</b> | 4.79         | 0.46  |
|                  | 1. Most students feel a sense of belonging here.  | <b>5.28</b> | 5.25         | 0.03  |
|                  | 44. I generally know what's happening on campus.  | <b>5.36</b> | 4.71         | 0.65  |
|                  | 59. New student orientation services help students adjust to college.                   | <b>5.59</b> | 4.97         | 0.62  |
|                  | 33. Admissions counselors accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices.  | <b>5.65</b> | 4.93         | 0.72  |
|                  | 30. The career services office provides students with the help they need to get a job.  | <b>5.69</b> | 4.75         | 0.94  |
|                  | 38. The student center is a comfortable place for students to spend their leisure time. | <b>5.74</b> | 5.24         | 0.50  |

**Performance Gap**

*Scale: 1 (not important/satisfied at all) – 4 (neutral) – 7 (very important/satisfied)*

|   | Item  | Gap          | Importance | Satisfaction |
|---|---|--------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Top 10</b>   | 10. Child care facilities are available on campus.  | <b>-0.26</b> | 4.33       | 4.59         |
|   | 17. Personnel in the Veterans' Services program are helpful.                                  | <b>0.01</b>  | 4.59       | 4.58         |
|   | 1. Most students feel a sense of belonging here.  | <b>0.03</b>  | 5.28       | 5.25         |
|   | 19. This campus provides effective support services for displaced homemakers.                 | <b>0.15</b>  | 4.85       | 4.70         |
|   | 26. Library staff are helpful and approachable.   | <b>0.40</b>  | 5.94       | 5.54         |
|   | 3. The quality of instruction in the vocational/technical programs is excellent.              | <b>0.42</b>  | 5.75       | 5.35         |
|   | 68. On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.  | <b>0.42</b>  | 6.08       | 5.66         |
|   | 45. This institution has a good reputation within the community.                              | <b>0.44</b>  | 5.97       | 5.55         |
|   | 21. There are a sufficient number of study areas on campus.                                   | <b>0.46</b>  | 5.93       | 5.49         |
|   | 4. Security staff are helpful.  | <b>0.50</b>  | 5.25       | 4.79         |
| 38. The student center is a comfortable place for students to spend their leisure time. | <b>0.51</b>   | 5.74         | 5.24       |              |
| <b>Bottom 10</b>  | 39. The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.                                | <b>1.94</b>  | 6.21       | 4.27         |
|   | 13. Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning. | <b>1.48</b>  | 5.97       | 4.49         |
|   | 65. Students are notified early in the term if they are doing poorly in a class.              | <b>1.44</b>  | 6.11       | 4.67         |
|   | 25. My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.                       | <b>1.36</b>  | 5.92       | 4.56         |
|   | 40. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about the transfer requirements of other schools.    | <b>1.24</b>  | 6.12       | 4.78         |
|   | 63. I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus.                    | <b>1.24</b>  | 5.95       | 4.71         |
|   | 12. My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward.                                    | <b>1.23</b>  | 5.86       | 4.66         |
|   | 7. Adequate financial aid is available for most students.                                     | <b>1.22</b>  | 6.06       | 4.83         |
|   | 32. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about my program requirements.                       | <b>1.14</b>  | 6.13       | 4.91         |
|   | 5. The personnel involved in registration are helpful.  | <b>1.13</b>  | 6.17       | 5.03         |
| 6. My academic advisor is approachable.   | <b>1.10</b>   | 6.08         | 4.95       |              |