

The College of Optometry's Response to Gallup Poll Data

Student Engagement:

In analyzing our Gallup poll results, it became apparent that we had lower-than-expected student engagement scores in the Gallup-identified areas of confidence and integrity. However, having all of our four classes' survey results bundled together made it difficult to isolate underlying problems driving these lower scores. With the goal in mind of obtaining a finer-grained assessment of the issues, the College developed survey instruments to be administered to each of our four classes (years) of students. Fourth year students answered their survey online, using the University's opinio survey software. All other students were issued a scantron survey with space for written comments. Surveys were administered during class time with an invitation to provide continued written input at any time to the College administration.

Happily, these class-specific surveys quickly revealed that our students are overall quite satisfied with the bulk of the curriculum, the faculty, and the facilities. Two curricular areas of student concern did come to light, which are being addressed by faculty and administration with significant input by students. As an example, many students felt that the grading and evaluation system in place for our third year clinic was not being uniformly applied by all faculty for all students. We invited students to submit narratives of "best practices" in the clinical setting, and are using those scenarios as the basis for a clinic faculty retreat to be held in April 2008. We have also completed revision of our evaluation form for the clinics, to emphasize constructive feedback as opposed to a "grade."

Faculty and Staff Engagement:

Similarly, faculty engagement results were lower than expected, but the results were not specific enough to prompt any direct curative action. A follow-up anonymous faculty survey combining forced choice and open-ended questions uncovered some interesting trends, particularly in the specific areas where faculty disagreed with the statement "my opinions count." To address some of these issues, task forces are being formed to re-evaluate the workload and the evaluation and promotion policies. A web board was created to facilitate ongoing discussion among faculty and administrators regarding other areas of interest. Faculty representatives are being invited to administrative and operations meetings, and other plans to enhance communication across the College are being considered.

Staff surveys and responses to those surveys were similarly conducted.

"Town meetings" with faculty and staff as well as first, second, and third year students have been conducted to review Gallup results and follow up survey results, along with the actions being taken to address areas of perceived weakness.

Permanent locked suggestion boxes were purchased, to be placed in the dean's reception area and in the faculty mailroom to allow an ongoing method for all College constituents to have a voice.

Finally, the College purchased T-shirts and lapel buttons for all students, faculty, staff, and administration, with the logo "Eye Care about NSU College of Optometry & The Eye Care Institute."