

HOME

Results from the Housing Outcomes Measurement & Evaluation Survey

Student Life Research & Assessment
University Residences & Dining Services
March 2011

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Outcomes Measurement & Evaluation (HOME) Survey was designed in Autumn 2009 and Winter 2010 by University Residences & Dining Services (URDS) and Student Life Research & Assessment (SLRA). University Residences spent several months developing their *major activities* and *expected outcomes*.

University Residences Major Activities and Expected Outcomes

Major Activity 1: Create Community

Expected Outcomes:

1. As a result of the activities and services provided by University Residences, residents will engage with the university community.
2. As a result of the activities and services provided by University Residences, residents will understand the value of global perspectives.

Major Activity 2: Enhance Learning and Development

Expected Outcomes:

1. As a result of the activities and services provided by University Residences, residents will form meaningful connections to contextualize their learning.
2. As a result of the activities and services provided by University Residences, residents will apply principles and ideas from their university experience to their lives.

Major Activity 3: Help Students Succeed

Expected Outcomes:

1. As a result of the activities and services provided by University Residences, residents will develop the ability to achieve academic and personal success.
2. As a result of the activities and services provided by University Residences, residents will understand the value of wellness in connection with their success.

A shift from satisfaction assessment to outcomes assessment in the division of Student Life led to the development of the HOME Survey. University Residences created the HOME Survey to assess all six Expected Outcomes under the three main Major Activities. Several rounds of piloting and expert review were conducted before the research team produced the final version of the HOME Survey. The 39-item questionnaire was launched online for all residents in URDS housing at Ohio State in Spring 2010. The survey reached approximately 10,000 students with 4,353 students responding (43.5% response rate).

METHOD

The survey was programmed into SNAP Online by SLRA. The survey was linked with a database of residents living on campus. An invitation e-mail was launched that contained the survey link and a description of the study. Once a resident clicked on the link, his or her e-mail address was embedded in the results. This was done to ensure that residents did not complete the survey more than once and was also used to choose random winners for participation prizes. After a student took the survey, the individual was no longer contacted with e-mail reminders. Three reminders were sent out to those who

had not completed the survey; the survey was closed after approximately four weeks. Results were downloaded and resident e-mail addresses were stripped before data analysis.

DEMOGRAPHICS

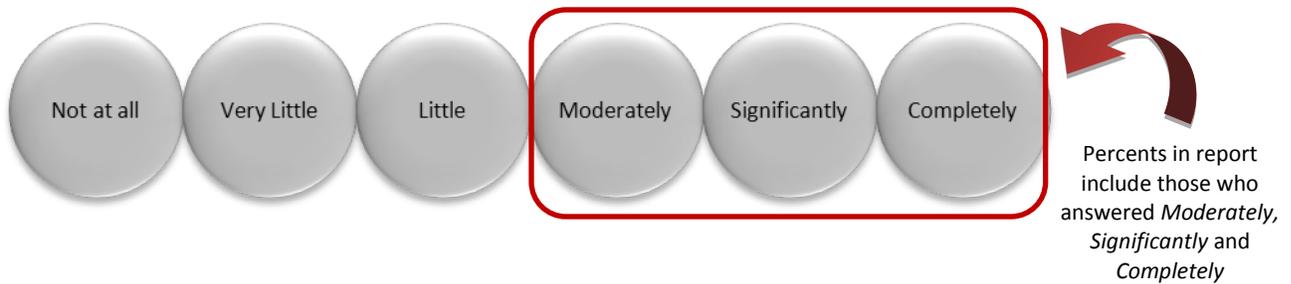
The respondents to the survey were mostly White/Caucasian (76.8%), first-year (60.0%) students who had only attended the Ohio State Columbus campus (88.5%) and who had lived on-campus for one to three quarters (68.8%). Below are the demographic breakdowns for the respondents to the survey:

Gender	%	Transfer Status	%
Female	53.3	Ohio State Only	88.5
Male	46.3	Transfer from Regional Campus	8.8
Transgender	0.2	Transfer from another school	2.7

Race/Ethnicity	%	Year in School	%
Asian/Pacific Islander	11.8	First-year	60.0
African-American/Black	5.1	Second-year	25.3
Alaska Native/American Indian	0.3	Third-year	7.3
Hispanic/Latin@	2.4	Fourth-year	3.5
White/Caucasian	76.8	Fifth-year	0.4
Multiracial	2.7	Graduate/Professional	3.0

HIGHLIGHTS

- Living in the residence halls had a strong, positive impact on the development of social skills, life skills, and cultural understanding.
- Residents felt that living in the residence halls helped them balance academics (67.4%) and increase their commitment to academic success (63.8%).
- Female students (71.0%) are more likely to participate in campus events than are male students (64.0%).
- African-American students (50.9%) and Hispanic students (52.0%) are the most likely to participate in service activities.
- African-American students (75.1%) were most likely to have learned about campus offices, organizations, and other resources through their residence hall experience.
- Females (84.8%) were more likely to feel connected to Ohio State than were males (82.0%).



FINDINGS

The following findings showcase the results of each question on the survey as broken down by category. The categories are divided into three overarching themes that correspond to major activities that URDS performs: *Create Community*, *Enhance Learning & Development*, and *Help Students Succeed*.

In the results that follow, the percentage column reflects the percentage of students who responded *Moderately*, *Significantly*, or *Completely*. The participants responded on a six-point scale including: *Not at all*, *Very little*, *Little*, *Moderately*, *Significantly*, *Completely*. Students were asked to respond based on the following prompt: “**To what extent did your Residence Hall Experience POSITIVELY INFLUENCE the following...**”

SCALE BREAKDOWN BY MAJOR ACTIVITIES

The scales in the HOME survey were organized as follows (with each scale nested under one of the three major activities of URDS).

<u>Create Community</u>	<u>Enhance Learning & Development</u>	<u>Help Students Succeed</u>
Campus Involvement	Academic Growth	Opportunity Seeking
Cultural Understanding	Intellectual Growth	Personal Growth
Social Skills		Life Skills

CREATE COMMUNITY

The *Create Community* category consists of three sub-scales of items. These include: *Campus Involvement*, *Cultural Understanding*, and *Social Skills*. These sub-scales assess elements of the student experience in residence halls; the elements relate to interacting with others in the halls, engaging in dialogue, participating in events in the hall and around campus, and engaging in community development. The results for these categories show that over 81% of students feel that living in the residence halls has been a positive influence on their ability to make new friends. Over 79% of students feel that living in the residence halls helped them when interacting with other students. Similarly, 76% were more apt to interact with people who are different from themselves because of their living arrangements.

To what extent did your residence hall experience POSITIVELY INFLUENCE the following...

Campus Involvement	%
Participation in a co-curricular organization or activity	52.9
Participation in community/campus service	45.0
Participation in campus events (Welcome Week, theater performances, etc.)	67.2
Participation in events in my residence hall	63.6

To what extent did your residence hall experience POSITIVELY INFLUENCE the following...

Cultural Understanding	%
Interacting with people who are different than me	76.0
Understanding of other cultures	65.6
Appreciation of opinions that are different than my own	61.9
Having meaningful conversations about topics like race/ethnicity, sexual orientation or religion/spirituality	62.8
Ability to respectfully disagree with others	71.2

To what extent did your residence hall experience POSITIVELY INFLUENCE the following...

Social Skills	%
Reaching out to new people and/or making friends	81.3
Interacting with other students living in my residence hall/complex	79.3
Talking about things I learn in class in my residence hall/complex	63.7
Talking about world events with others	59.1
Understanding of who I am as a person	68.4

ENHANCE LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

The *Enhance Learning & Development* category consists of the sub-scales of *Academic Growth* and *Intellectual Growth*. These sub-scales assess the role that residence hall communities play in helping students learn, commit to their academic goals, and connect classroom material to real-world examples. Almost 64% of students felt that living in the halls helped them to increase their commitment to succeed academically; 56% felt that living in the residence halls helped them to develop better study skills.

To what extent did your residence hall experience POSITIVELY INFLUENCE the following...

Academic Growth	%
Talking to my professors	35.4
Asking for academic help	49.3
Balancing my academics and my social life	67.4
Increasing commitment to succeed academically	63.8

To what extent did your residence hall experience POSITIVELY INFLUENCE the following...

Intellectual Growth	%
Developing better study skills	56.4
Relating things in my own life to what I study/learn in the classroom	47.4
Understanding how material taught in one class may relate to material taught in my other classes (engineering and history, etc.)	46.0
Recognizing the relationship between class material and world events	46.9
Participation in lectures/workshops/other academic-related events	49.0

HELP STUDENTS SUCCEED

The *Help Students Succeed* category consists of the sub-scales *Opportunity Seeking*, *Personal Growth*, and *Life Skills* items. These sub-scales assess students' abilities to look beyond the residence hall or the classroom to develop as an individual. The results show that 82% of students felt that living in the residence halls positively influenced their connectedness to Ohio State. Also, 74% felt more comfortable sharing their opinions and experiences with others, and 71% made the connection between wellness and their personal and academic success because of their experience in the residence halls.

To what extent did your residence hall experience POSITIVELY INFLUENCE the following...

Opportunity Seeking	%
Learning about campus offices, organizations, and/or resources	69.5
Learning about academic resources (Carmen, Libraries, Younkun Success Center, etc.)	65.8
Exploring new learning experiences (study abroad, service, research, internships, etc.)	55.7
Feeling connected to The Ohio State University	82.5

To what extent did your residence hall experience POSITIVELY INFLUENCE the following...

Personal Growth	%
Personal growth (becoming more independent, setting personal goals, etc.)	79.2
Spiritual growth (thinking about my beliefs, thinking about direction in life, etc.)	50.8
Academic growth (learning new things, setting career goals, etc.)	68.4
Sharing my own opinions and experiences with others	74.1

To what extent did your residence hall experience POSITIVELY INFLUENCE the following...

Life Skills	%
My time management skills (classes, work, activities, social life, etc.)	66.3
Understanding that my level of wellness impacts my personal/academic success	71.1
Consideration of various majors/minors of study or other academic-related activities	59.6
Giving thought to my career goals and my life after graduation	62.3

INTERACTIONS WITH STAFF

The four-item scale, *Interactions with Staff*, assesses the quality of interactions between students and staff members. Respondents were asked to rank items on a scale of 1 to 6, 1 representing "Strongly Disagree" and 6 "representing "Strongly Agree." The percentages reported reflect the number of students who responded that they Somewhat Agree (4), Agree (5), and Strongly Agree (6) with the items. This is scale a strong predictor of a positive student experience. Overall, 86% of students believe that staff members are approachable and 85% feel that residence hall staff are able to assist them or connect them with the right resource. Finally, 79% of students agreed that housing staff advocated on their behalf.

Interactions with Staff	%
Housing staff are approachable and are willing to listen to me	86.1
Housing staff are able to assist me or connect me with someone who could provide assistance	85.0
Housing staff value people and relationships ahead of processes and procedures	79.8
Housing staff advocate on my behalf	79.1

IMPLICATIONS

Overall, the residence hall experience has a positive effect on student development. One of the most striking results is the importance and prevalence of positive staff interactions. The presence and importance of the Resident Advisor (RA)/resident relationship is touted in the literature as an important aspect of residence hall living. Often, survey results show that students are satisfied with their RA's performance. The HOME Survey takes this one step further by demonstrating that, when students agree that staff members will advocate for them or are approachable and helpful, the student experience is strengthened. Students who report high levels of interaction with residence hall staff are more likely to be involved on campus, invested in their residence hall community, and academically committed than are students who do not interact with residence hall staff.

The HOME Survey results demonstrate that the residence hall experience is especially important for the level of connectedness that students experience with the university. Some of the highest scoring questions on the survey were around issues of belonging, involvement around campus, and resource seeking. Showing students how to become involved and providing them with resources to find what they need around campus are two of the prime directives of residence hall staff members. It is clear from the results of the HOME Survey that living in the residence halls helps students to reach out and connect with academic resources, Student Life offices, and other students.

The HOME Survey results make a strong case for the importance of the residence hall experience. The role of the residence hall experience in helping students grow as students, citizens, and members of the Ohio State community, is a crucial concern for The Ohio State University.