Published once each semester, this newsletter is designed to inform readers of the activities, information, and services provided by Ball State’s Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE). **Insights** will be distributed each semester via email as well as archived on our web site.

**Workplace Environment Survey**

OIE developed the Workplace Environment Survey (WES) in order to collect information on the importance and satisfaction that full-time faculty and staff members ascribe to various aspects of their employment at Ball State. In consultation with faculty and staff member working groups and the President’s Cabinet, surveys were developed that included items concerning job satisfaction and the University’s climate for diversity and inclusion, as well as demographics. Some of the diversity and inclusion items were purchased from a consultant. Separate surveys were developed for faculty members and academic administrators and for staff members (professional staff, staff personnel, and service staff), although many items were the same between the two groups. OIE plans to administer the WES every 2-3 years in order to provide information for Ball State’s strategic plan performance indicators as well as give general feedback to the University community.

The WES was sent by means of a link in an email message to all full-time faculty and staff members on September 27, 2012. Reminders were sent to non-respondents on October 2, 8, 11, and 15. Printed versions of the surveys were developed and sent to staff members in Housing and Residence Life, Facilities Planning and Management, and University Dining who do not have access to a computer in their workplace.

Among the 2,966 faculty and staff members contacted, 2,149 responded to the WES for a 72.5% response rate (66.5% for faculty members and academic administrators and 75.8% for staff members). Females, racial/ethnic minorities, staff members (as compared with faculty members and academic administrators), and employees in the less than age 52 group were slightly over-represented among the respondents. Faculty members and academic administrators rated nearly all items as important. The majority of faculty members and academic administrators were satisfied or very satisfied with the majority of the satisfaction items. Less than 50% were satisfied or very satisfied with 16 of the 60 items posed to them. Staff members rated most items as important. The majority were satisfied or very satisfied with the majority of the satisfaction items. Less than 50% were satisfied or very satisfied with 7 of the 48 items posed to them. Eighty percent or more were satisfied or very satisfied with 7 of the items.

Respondents were asked to identify their one most reliable source of information about news, decisions, and changes regarding Ball State. Faculty members identified their department chair/school director as their most reliable source of information, followed by the President’s Perspective, colleagues, and Communications Center e-mail messages. Staff members identified Communications Center e-mail messages, their supervisors, the President’s Perspective, and colleagues as their most reliable sources of information. Other important sources of information about news, decisions, and changes regarding Ball State identified by faculty members included colleagues, President’s Perspective and other e-mails from the Office of the President, their department chair/school director, their dean, and Communications Center e-mail messages. Other important sources of information identified by staff members included colleagues, President’s Perspective and other e-mails from the Office of the President, Communications Center e-mail messages, The Star Press, and the Daily News. Email was identified as the most popular preference for means of information delivery by both faculty and staff members.

Seventy-four percent of faculty members and academic administrators and 82% of staff members indicated that within the past 3 years they had not experienced work-related intimidating or hostile conduct that interferes with their ability to do their jobs. Twelve percent of faculty members and academic administrators rated nearly all items as important. The majority of faculty members and academic administrators were satisfied or very satisfied with the majority of the satisfaction items. Less than 50% were satisfied or very satisfied with 16 of the 60 items posed to them. Staff members rated most items as important. The majority were satisfied or very satisfied with the majority of the satisfaction items. Less than 50% were satisfied or very satisfied with 7 of the 48 items posed to them. Eighty percent or more were satisfied or very satisfied with 7 of the items.

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Twelve percent of faculty members and academic administrators and 9% of staff members said they had seriously considered leaving Ball State because of the institutional climate for diversity. Among those respondents who said they considered leaving, most said they did so during 2011-2012. Among the 20% of respondents who indicated they experienced intimidating or hostile conduct, the largest portions said such conduct was based upon “other reasons.” Additional reasons for the conduct offered by the respondents included their job role, biological sex, and age. Seventy-eight percent of faculty respondents said they had incorporated diversity-related material in their classes, 32% said they conducted diversity-related research, and 49% indicated they engage in diversity-related service.

Respondents were asked to rate the climate for diversity, once for their department or work unit and once for the overall University. In both cases, the majority of faculty and staff members felt the climate was positive in all categories. Particularly large percentages of faculty and staff members described the climate at Ball State as friendly and improving.

The full report of the results of the Fall 2012 Workplace Environment Survey is available on OIE’s Surveys and Studies web page.
Staff Satisfaction with Workplace Satisfaction Items (Common Items)

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

- My current job at Ball State University
- Ball State University as a place to work
- Having appropriate freedom to do my job
- Campus safety and security
- Ball State's contributions to the local community
- How issues of low performance are addressed in my department or school
- Clarity of direction for the future provided by university leadership
- Openness of communication by university leadership
- Recognition and awards programs
- Celebrating significant milestones and important accomplishments at this institution
- How Ball State University is run
- A strong sense of teamwork on campus
- Being proud to be part of this institution
Alumni Survey

Beginning in Summer 2012 OIE is sending surveys to all baccalaureate alumni who graduated 1 year ago and those who graduated 5 years ago. The survey will be administered annually. The 2012 survey had an overall 25% response rate (26% from 2006-07 graduates and 25% from 2010-11 graduates).

Approximately 72% of respondents were employed full-time. About 76% of those were employed full-time in their major or a related area. About 83% indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their current employment. Among those employed full-time, about 66% reported that a college degree was required for their employment. Nearly 67% of full-time employed alumni were working in Indiana and about 12% were working elsewhere in the Midwest.

Approximately 32% of respondents were pursuing graduate or professional degrees. About 75% were pursuing some type of further education, from graduate programs to job training and professional development. Approximately 56% of respondents reported plans to eventually obtain a graduate or professional degree. About 22% indicated they had no plans for further education. Nearly half of those who named the institution for graduate or professional school indicated they were attending Ball State.

More than 94% of respondents held positive or very positive attitudes toward Ball State. At least 96% of all respondents indicated that their experiences at Ball State prepared them very well or satisfactorily in the areas of intellectual and personal growth. At least 86% reported that they were very well or satisfactorily prepared for a career and for further education. More than 94% of all respondents were satisfactorily or very well prepared with regard to speaking, listening, problem solving, analyzing and evaluating ideas, critical thinking, and lifelong learning. About 94% reported that their Ball State experiences prepared them very well (45%) or satisfactorily (49%) in the area of writing skills. Math skills were the lowest rated academic skill, with about 1 in 5 graduates reporting poor preparation in this area. About 6 out of 10 respondents indicated that Ball State experiences prepared them very well to work cooperatively with others. Less than 3% felt they were poorly prepared in this area. More than 9 in 10 respondents indicated their Ball State experiences prepared them very well or satisfactorily in all 8 personal and career skills.

Nearly 6 in 10 respondents report participation in student clubs or organizations at Ball State. Twelve percent of all respondents indicated they had taken capstone courses and at least 15% reported other immersive learning experiences (16%) or study abroad experiences (15%).

About 8 out of 10 respondents agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied with feedback from instructors about their academic progress (81%) and opportunities for evaluation of classroom instruction in their department (79%). Almost 3 out of 4 respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with faculty advising in their department. About 7 out of 10 respondents agreed or strongly agreed they were satisfied that courses in their department prepared them for employment. Nearly 9 in 10 respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their department of major, and with the teaching ability and professional expertise of faculty in their major.

The full report of the results of the 2012 Alumni Survey is available on OIE’s Surveys and Studies web page.

2011-2012 Retention Study

OIE conducted a comprehensive study to examine factors related to the Fall 2012 re-enrollment of Fall 2011 new, full-time, baccalaureate-seeking first-year students. The study examined how 2011-2012 retention rates varied according to demographic, pre-college, and enrollment variables; what demographic, pre-college, and enrollment variables and survey results significantly predicted retention rates; what significant relationships existed between 2011-2012 retention rates and course grades.

Retention rates were higher for females, international and Asian students, non-first generation students, in-state students, students with a dependent financial aid status and those whose financial aid dependency status could not be determined, students with greater levels of family financial contribution to the cost of college, students with higher SAT and ACT scores, and students with higher high school grade point averages and graduation percentiles.

Retention rates were higher for students in the Teachers College (TC), College of Fine Arts (CFA), and those with interdisciplinary majors. Students were better retained if they participated in the Honors College; lived on campus during their first year; lived in the Dehority Complex; lived in living-learning communities. Retention was also higher for students retained Fall 2011 to Spring 2012 who completed a greater number of credit hours and achieved higher grade point averages in the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 semesters.

No demographic or pre-college variables had statistically significant relationships with retention and medium or large effect sizes. Only three enrollment variables had statistically significant relationships with retention and medium or large effect sizes: the student’s college at the beginning of the Spring 2012 semester (retention was highest in CFA, TC, and for students with interdisciplinary majors and lowest for students in University College), credit hours completed in the Spring 2012 semester (students with more credit hours were better retained), and cumulative grade point average at the end of the Spring 2012 semester (students with higher GPAs were better retained). All but 8 of the 157 items on the Summer Orientation Survey were significantly related to retention, but none of these had medium or large effect sizes. All but 10 of the 190 items in the MAP-Works Survey were significantly related to retention, but none of these had medium or large effect sizes. All but 10 of the 190 items in
2011-2012 Retention Study ~ continued

MAP-Works Survey were significantly related to retention, but none of these had medium or large effect sizes. Half (43) of the 86 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) items were significantly related to retention, but had only small or very small effect sizes. The relationship was examined between retention and grades in selected courses (where at least 100 freshmen were enrolled in Academic Year 2011-2012). Seventy-nine of the analyses had medium or large effect sizes. Courses with large effect sizes included ANTH 101, ANTH 111, ARCH 100, ASTR 100, BIO 111, BIO 112, CAP 102, CAP 162, CHEM 100, CHEM 101, CHEM 111, CJC 102, CS 104, EDHI 200, FCS 103, FIN 110, GEOG 150, HONR 201, HONR 202, JOUR 101, LA 100, MATH 112, NEWS 105, NEWS 108, NEWS 133, NREM 101, SP 201, THEA 103, THEA 104, THEA 232, THEA 280. In all cases, students with higher grades in each course were more likely to be retained.

Actionable tactics suggested by the study results include: emphasizing the Honors College, working to ensure that students come to class prepared, recruiting students with higher levels of family financial contribution to college costs, providing support for students who need to care for dependents, emphasizing graduates’ career success and national rankings of academic programs, providing students with options that allow them to remain at Ball State if they are considering changing majors, promoting college visits (including Ball State Preview Day), and following up on cues from MAP-Works and other sources where students may be indicating they are experiencing attrition-prone behaviors. Current efforts to facilitate students’ awareness of their success in first-year courses during the times they are enrolled in those courses are also supported by this study. The full report of the results of the 2012 Alumni Survey is available online at OIE’s Surveys and Studies web page.

Blackboard Outcomes

Bill Knight has been meeting with all academic departments this semester to provide an overview of Blackboard Outcomes, which is designed to contribute to our assessment of student learning efforts by facilitating evaluation, with rubrics, of previously-developed student work products such as papers, presentations, photos, etc. Several academic departments continue their involvement in a pilot project of using Bb Outcomes in assessment activities for the majors, and discussion is continuing about the use of Bb Outcomes within the University Core Curriculum. More information will continue to be provided about this project.

Blackboard Analytics

Over the spring 2013 semester, the OIE, Information Technology Services, and numerous offices around campus continued the implementation of Blackboard Analytics with a complete review of data warehouse’s data quality and business logic. To this end, OIE and numerous offices have completed the data validation process for a few important areas of student information. Over the summer of 2013, OIE will continue to partner with offices across campus as we continue to review and refine the data warehouse. In order to make the data warehouse more accessible, Ball State purchased Pyramid Analytics software. Pyramid Analytics is a report and dashboard development environment that is distributed completely via the web with no installation of software required. The first phase of the campus-wide roll out will start in August 2013. End-user training sessions will be held throughout the fall semester. At the same time, ‘How-to’ documents will be developed and posted to the OIE website. More information will be provided at the start of the Fall 2013 semester.

OIE Represented on the National Stage

Brian Pickrell and Bill Knight will present a session on A Faculty/Staff Job Satisfaction/Diversity Climate Survey: Lessons Learned at the Association for Institutional Research national conference in Long Beach, CA, in May. Knight will present a second session titled Using Blackboard Outcomes for Assessment. He will also be presented with AIR’s Outstanding Service Award at the conference. Knight and others are editing Colleges Building Bridges for Student Success: A Sourcebook, to be published by the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange.

Moving On

Rebecca Costomiris, Academic Assessment Specialist and Publications Editor, is retiring on June 30 after nearly 14 years of service to OIE and Ball State University.

Jolene Pastir, Academic Assessment Analyst, has resigned effective February 15.

We thank them both for their outstanding work and wish them all the best for the future!

Projects of Note

- Graduate students participating in a Spring 2013 internship in OIE as part of the Institutional Research Graduate Certificate Program conducted a survey of certificate program alumni.
- Interns also completed analyses concerning the responses of transfer students to the MAP-Works and NSSE surveys. This project supports an assessment initiative within the Office of Housing and Residence Life.
- Responses to the AAUP, CUPA-HR and OSU annual faculty salary surveys have been submitted and comparative results should soon be available.
- OIE developed and administered a survey about the commuting practices of Ball State faculty and staff members and students to support the measurement of the University’s sustainability performance for the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS).