

3.C.4 “Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.”

As with any large academic institution, there are a number of activities involving students and instructors. Ball State University has had a long history of providing a nurturing environment for student learning with close, personal-professional contact between instructors and students. There are host of examples on campus of student-faculty collaboration in the classroom, through independent study projects, undergraduate honors theses, on graduate research projects, collaborative research, and immersive learning projects. All of these examples focus on the robust, vibrant and diverse nature of campus student inquiry.

Instructors are accessible to students in many different forms. In addition to the special one-one-one and small group projects listed in the previous paragraph, instructors are accessible to students for class advising, career counseling, and for assistance with other aspects of student life and learning. There are a number of sources which confirm the overall positive experiences of students while at Ball State University regarding their ability to consult with faculty. The *Ball State University Senior Survey* conducted in the fall of 2011 is one such source. When asked in this survey about the “ease of access to instructors” respondents stated some level of satisfaction 90.2% of the time with 73.2% of the respondents indicating they were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” (n=329) (*Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Ball State Senior Survey, Fall 2011, extract, p. 1*). When students were asked to respond to the question “I have developed a close personal relationship with at least one faculty or staff member at Ball State University” 33.8% strongly agreed and 39.5% agreed with this statement (n=157) (*Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Ball State Senior Survey, Fall 2011, extract, p. 2*). Over 95% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “Most Ball State faculty are friendly and helpful” (n=153) (*Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Ball State*

Senior Survey, Fall 2011, extract, p. 2). When asked about consultation with faculty outside of class about course work and career plans, the responses to these areas were overwhelmingly positive with agreement 87.9% (n=157) and 77.7% (n=166) of the time, respectively (*Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Ball State Senior Survey, Fall 2011, extract, p. 4*).

A second source of information for this area is the *Ball State University 2010 Alumni Survey of 2008-2009 Graduates*. Of the campus alum respondents, 50% indicated they occasionally interacted with faculty (n=154) and another 19.5% stated they interacted often with faculty (n=60) (*Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2010 Alumni Survey of 2008-2009 Graduates, p. 25, Table 3.4*). When asked “I am satisfied with faculty advising in my department” responses were overwhelmingly positive with 32.9% (n=307) stating they strongly agreed with the statement and 38.1% (n=307) agreeing with the statement (*Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2010 Alumni Survey of 2008-2009 Graduates, p. 28, Table 4.1*). Alumni were also asked to respond to the question “I am satisfied with opportunities for interaction with departmental faculty.” The responses in the “strongly agree” category was 36.2% (n=307) and 44.3% (n=307) for the “agree” category (*Office of Institutional Effectiveness, 2010 Alumni Survey of 2008-2009 Graduates, p. 28, Table 4.1*).

Ball State University provides and fosters a dynamic and vibrant environment for student inquiry with instructors. Both seniors and alum of the institution responded in the *Senior Survey* and the *Alumni Survey* an impressive level of satisfaction with the ability to interact with faculty on campus and within their programs of study.