

STUDENT SATISFACTION AT SPRING HILL COLLEGE, SPRING 2003

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Over the past several years, Spring Hill College has polled the level of student satisfaction with numerous aspects of campus life. Two main instruments have been used to undertake this analysis: a survey of graduating seniors; and a broader survey of all students – the Student Satisfaction Inventory [SSI] developed by Noel-Levitz, a major college admissions and retention consulting firm. The most recent SSI was conducted in January 2003, near the beginning of the Spring semester. Josetta Mulloy, Director of Student Academic Services, oversaw the data collection effort.

The overall results, as compiled by Noel Levitz, show high levels of satisfaction with almost all segments of campus life. Of the 92 satisfaction question asked, 76 of them had a mean response of “somewhat satisfied” or higher [83%]. All items use a 7-point scale, as follows:

- 1: not satisfied at all
- 2: not very satisfied
- 3: somewhat dissatisfied
- 4: neutral
- 5: somewhat satisfied
- 6: satisfied
- 7: very satisfied

Some questions pertained to the importance of items. These responses used the same scale, except “unimportant/important” replaced “dissatisfied/satisfied.” While this report emphasizes student satisfaction, we will also address item importance when appropriate.

Students were asked a variety of demographic questions allowing us to disaggregate the results into many categories. For example, we can identify a student’s gender, ethnicity, level (freshman, sophomore, graduate, etc.), whether a day or night student, resident or commuter (and if a resident, which hall), major field of study, and the like. As we look at the disaggregated results, we can better identify those areas where the College is performing especially well, and those areas where we need a closer look.

What constitutes a “good” or a “bad” result is a matter of interpretation. The reader may wish to consider the following subjective guidelines in interpreting results. 1) Items with mean scores above 5.5 represent very favorable responses, and scores above 6.0 are superb findings. A mean of 6.0 is an *average* response of “satisfied,” and this is unusual with a 7-point scale. 2) Mean responses below 4.5 may deserve close scrutiny, and an item mean below 4.0 is clearly problematic. Recall that a “4” is a “neutral” response. Given a tendency to respond favorably to surveys such as the SSI, an average score below neutral implies very strong dissatisfaction.

Because the needs and interests of traditional day, evening undergraduate, and graduate students differ greatly, results are presented separately for these groups. Many more traditional day students responded than evening students, enabling us to present much more detail for satisfaction levels among the traditional student population.

Overall Satisfaction: Traditional Undergraduates

A total of 582 traditional undergraduate students responded to the survey, although not every item had this many responses. This large sample size, plus the fact that this is a response rate of around 58%, implies the results are statistically very reliable. The first two tables give the items with the highest and lowest levels of satisfaction among traditional undergraduate students.

Table 1. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – All Traditional Undergraduate Students

Statement	Mean satisfaction	Rank
This institution has a good reputation within the community.	6.24	1
My academic advisor is approachable.	6.24	1
Nearly all the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	6.05	3
Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	6.02	4
My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements of my major.	6.00	5
My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.	5.96	6
I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	5.95	7
There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.	5.95	7
The instruction in my major field is excellent.	5.91	9
The content of courses within my major is valuable.	5.89	10
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	5.89	10
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my courses is excellent.	5.89	10
Faculty care about me as an individual.	5.82	13
Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	5.79	14
Major requirements are clear and reasonable.	5.74	15
Tutoring services are readily available.	5.73	16
Computer labs are adequate and accessible.	5.72	17
The campus staff are caring and helpful.	5.71	18
This institution shows concern for students as individuals.	5.71	18
I can easily get involved in campus organizations.	5.68	20
Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.	5.67	21
It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.	5.64	22
I have adequate opportunities to become involved with volunteer service organizations and activities.	5.57	23
The business office is open during hours which are convenient for most students.	5.57	23
Rate your overall satisfaction with your experience here thus far.	5.56	25
I feel a sense of pride about my campus.	5.55	26
Admissions staff are knowledgeable.	5.53	27
Most students feel a sense of belonging here.	5.52	28
Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning.	5.51	29

In every case above, institutional results are far above national levels of satisfaction for these variables. These 29 statements all have mean responses at Spring Hill of 5.5 or higher. Note the list includes a global statement rating “overall satisfaction with your experience [at SHC] thus far” [mean of 5.56]

Table 2. Lowest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – All Traditional Undergraduate Students

Statement	Mean satisfaction	Rank
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	2.79	1
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	4.42	2
Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.	4.46	3
There are a sufficient number of weekend activities for students.	4.46	3
The intercollegiate athletic programs contribute to a strong sense of school spirit.	4.48	5
The Freshman Seminar was a significant help in adjusting to academics at SHC.	4.52	6

Table 2. Lowest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – All Traditional Undergraduate Students

Statement	Mean satisfaction	Rank
Student activity fees are put to good use.	4.53	7
There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.	4.54	8
Student Government as a whole serves an effective purpose on this campus.	4.57	9
Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate space, lighting, heat, air, etc.).	4.67	10

The only statement eliciting an extremely negative response deals with the adequacy of campus parking. The mean of 2.79 is very low, even when compared to a low national mean among private institutions of 3.77. Due to the many construction projects on campus, plus the change in campus traffic flow, this finding is not terribly surprising. This mean score is well below the (also negative) result on the same item in 2001 (3.40). On the other hand, the adequacy of food service was the cause of the most dissatisfaction in the 2001 survey, with a mean score of 3.37 in that year. While food service still received low marks, the mean score rose to 4.54 and the “Bottom 10” ranking moved from number one to number eight. Furthermore, our 2003 food service satisfaction mean is now significantly above the national average of 3.99. This is strong endorsement of actions taken since 2001.

In all, there are only five items with means below 4.5 (5% of total statements), and 19 statements with means below 5.0 (21%). There are only six items on the 2003 “Bottom 10” list that repeat from the 2001 survey; parking adequacy is the only statement which shows a decline in satisfaction. The “intercollegiate athletics/school spirit” statement is virtually unchanged from two years ago. The national average on this item is very similar to the Spring Hill result. All other statements that were in the Spring Hill “Bottom 10” in both surveys show rather large gains from the 2001 survey (food service selection, security response to emergencies, residence hall comfort, and Freshman Seminar/academic adjustment). Although the Spring Hill scores are relatively low for residence hall comfort, they nonetheless exceed national averages.

The items new to the “Bottom 10 include one parking issue (lighting/security – where our result is significantly worse than the national average), and three items related to student life: weekend activities, student activity fees, and Student Government. It should be noted that while these items ranked poorly relative to other Spring Hill responses, the level of satisfaction with weekend activities and with activity fees is significantly better at Spring Hill than for the national results.

The items which dropped out of the Spring Hill “Bottom 10” since 2001 dealt with library resources, residence hall regulations, commitment to commuter students, and an overall statement about how well the college has met the student’s expectations. While means on these four items have improved, the issue showing the greatest improvement is the statement, “residence hall regulations are reasonable.” The mean response on this item has changed from 4.46 in 2001 to 5.24 in 2003.

Table 3 offers another way to look at overall satisfaction. This table lists those areas that show at least a 0.3-point improvement between the means of the 2001 and the 2003 surveys. For comparison purposes, the table also shows means from the 1999 survey. Overall, 2001 results were lower than those found in both the earlier and the later survey. Nonetheless, it is apparent from the table that in many areas, we have shown improvement over a prolonged period. Another interesting finding is that many of the large improvements in student satisfaction occurred in areas where the level of satisfaction was already reasonably high; in other words, already-satisfied students became more satisfied [e.g., “enjoyable to be on campus;” “commitment to academic excellence”].

Table 3. Largest Improvement in Mean Satisfaction Scores, 1999 to 2003 – Traditional Students

Statement	1999 mean	2001 mean	2003 mean	2003 minus 2001	2003 minus 1999
There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.	3.88	3.38	4.54	1.16***	0.66***
Residence hall regulations are reasonable.	5.00	4.45	5.24	0.79***	0.25**
Computer labs are adequate and accessible.	5.35	5.20	5.72	0.52***	0.37***
The library has adequate books, periodicals, and electronic resources needed to complete assignments.	4.46	4.42	4.94	0.52***	0.49***
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of students with disabilities.	4.91	4.70	5.20	0.50***	0.29***
Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate space, lighting, heat, air, etc.).	4.18	4.19	4.67	0.48***	0.49***
There is a strong commitment to racial harmony on this campus.	5.10	5.00	5.45	0.45***	0.35***
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of under-represented populations.	4.88	4.73	5.12	0.39***	0.24**
Library resources and services are adequate.	4.80	4.69	5.07	0.38***	0.27***
Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.	4.34	4.09	4.46	0.37***	0.12
An appreciation for cultural diversity is evident among faculty and staff.	5.05	4.96	5.32	0.36***	0.27***
The Freshman Seminar was a significant help in adjusting to academics at SHC. [Importance, not satisfaction]	5.37	4.93	5.28	0.34***	-0.09
I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.	5.51	5.06	5.40	0.34***	-0.11
It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.	5.59	5.30	5.64	0.33***	0.05
Bookstore staff are helpful.	5.37	5.14	5.47	0.33***	0.10
There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.	5.74	5.62	5.95	0.33***	0.21***
Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.	5.48	5.35	5.67	0.32***	0.19**
Males and females have equal opportunities to participate in intercollegiate athletics.	5.24	5.18	5.48	0.30***	0.23**
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of commuters.	4.78	4.53	4.83	0.30***	0.05
Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	5.77	5.49	5.79	0.30***	0.02

*** significant at the .99 level

** significant at the .95 level

* significant at the .90 level

Although the table only lists 19 items, there were 44 survey items that showed significant increases in satisfaction from the 2001 to the 2003 survey (at the .95 level or higher). There were 19 survey items showing significant improvement in satisfaction from the 1999 to the 2003 survey.

The results above are very positive, and the campus community can take great pride in these findings. Campus efforts to upgrade food service, residence hall conditions, computer labs, the bookstore, and library resources are reflected in the findings. Likewise, our commitment to campus diversity, ADA compliance, security response to emergencies, and Title IX in intercollegiate athletics can be seen in improvement in student satisfaction. Issues remain, and they should not be ignored. However, the improvements should be celebrated.

There are fewer areas where satisfaction has slipped between surveys, as the following table shows. Table 4 reports only those items with statistically significant slippage from the 2001 to the 2003 survey and/or from the 1999 to the 2003 survey [0.95 level of significance].

Table 4. Largest Declines in Mean Satisfaction Scores, 1999 to 2003 – Traditional Students

Statement	1999 mean	2001 mean	2003 mean	2003 minus 2001	2003 minus 1999
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	3.83	3.39	2.79	-0.59***	-1.04***
Student Government as a whole serves an effective purpose on this campus.	4.71	4.89	4.57	-0.32***	-0.14
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	4.23	4.71	4.42	-0.29***	0.19*
There are a sufficient number of weekend activities for students.	5.11	4.73	4.46	-0.27***	-0.65***
The campus is safe and secure for all students.	4.74	5.52	5.34	-0.18**	0.60***
I generally know what's happening on campus.	5.55	5.31	5.28	-0.03	-0.27***
In general, the college provides adequate technological support.	5.38	5.09	4.99	-0.10	-0.40***
Student disciplinary procedures are fair.	5.33	4.92	5.00	0.08	-0.33***
The Freshman Seminar was a significant help in adjusting to academics at SHC.	4.78	4.31	4.52	0.20*	-0.26**

*** significant at the .99 level

** significant at the .95 level

* significant at the .90 level

Of the five items with significant declines from 2001 to 2003, two deal with parking. In fact, parking adequacy shows increasing dissatisfaction from 1999 to the present. However, students were more satisfied with parking lot lighting and security in 2003 than they were in 1999. Similarly, the overall security concerns, while slipping from 2001 to 2003, are significantly higher in 2003 than they were in 1999. It should be pointed out that the 1999 results were clearly affected by several unfortunate security problems that occurred shortly before the SSI was administered that year.

The slippage in satisfaction with student government and with weekend activities could be related. Since both items show drops in satisfaction relative to each of the prior surveys, this is a finding that may bear more attention; however, it may simply be a reflection of policies adopted by elected student leaders. Also of note is the steady decline in campus communication and in technological support. Subsequent analysis will show the dissatisfaction with campus communication centers in the commuting student population. I suspect both issues are also different manifestations of the increasing usage of the Internet on campus. On the one hand, we rely on the Internet to distribute information that used to be distributed via other means (causing the decline in knowing “what’s happening”); on the other hand, both higher expectations and excessive Internet use by a small cadre of students has created bandwidth bottlenecks that are perceived as a decline in technological support.

While students expressed less satisfaction with disciplinary procedures and with the Freshman Seminar in 2003 than in 1999, both items show improvement over the past two years. There appears to be no reason to be concerned about either result at this time.

Noel-Levitz, Inc., the designer of the SSI, suggests that survey results are best viewed by the “gap” between an item’s mean importance and its mean satisfaction. According to Noel-Levitz:

A large performance gap score for an item (e.g., 1.5) indicates the institution is not meeting the students’ expectations, whereas a small performance gap score (e.g., .50) indicates that an

institution is meeting students' expectations, and a negative gap score (e.g., -.25) indicates that an institution is exceeding student expectations.¹

Applying this rule of thumb to the traditional student responses yields the following “gap” results. To err on the side of caution, “gap” figures of 1.25 or higher are reported as unfavorable findings.

Table 5. Most Favorable Gaps Between Importance and Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – All Traditional Undergraduate Students

Statement	Gap	Rank
A variety of intramural activities are offered.	-0.05	1
Males and females have equal opportunities to participate in intercollegiate athletics.	0.06	2
This institution has a good reputation within the community.	0.15	3
I have adequate opportunities to become involved in volunteer service organizations & activities.	0.22	4
SHC is sensitive to the needs of women students.	0.23	5
Tutoring services are readily available.	0.26	6
There is a strong commitment to Catholic education and Jesuit values on this campus.	0.29	7
Bookstore staff are helpful.	0.31	8
The business office is open during hours which are convenient for most students.	0.35	9
I can easily get involved in campus organizations.	0.35	9
The library staff are helpful and approachable.	0.37	11
Campus ministry meets the spiritual needs of the students at SHC.	0.38	12
My academic advisor is approachable.	0.39	13
The student handbook provides helpful information about campus life.	0.42	14
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	0.47	14
Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	0.48	16
My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.	0.49	17

While “variety of intramurals” has a very good gap score, it also has a very low level of importance compared to the other items (4.99, with the next lowest in the table being an importance score of 5.17 for the “campus ministry” statement).

Table 6. Most Unfavorable Gaps Between Importance and Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – All Traditional Undergraduate Students

Statement	Gap	Rank
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	3.54	1
Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.	1.99	2
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	1.94	3
Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate space, lighting, heat, air, etc.).	1.84	4
There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.	1.78	5
Student activity fees are put to good use.	1.69	6
There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.	1.58	7
Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.	1.49	8
Channels for addressing student complaints are readily available.	1.37	9
The library has adequate books, periodicals, & electronic resources needed to complete assignments.	1.35	10
There are adequate services to help me decide upon a career.	1.35	10
In general, the college provides adequate technological support.	1.35	10
Billing policies are reasonable.	1.34	13
Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.	1.33	14
There are a sufficient number of weekend activities for students.	1.32	15
I seldom get the “run-around” when seeking information about campus life.	1.30	16

¹ Noel-Levitz, Inc., “Campus Report, Spring Hill College, Student Satisfaction Inventory,” (Fall 2002), 1-1.

The areas with the largest unfavorable gaps generally repeat the areas of concern raised earlier in this report. Note that in several cases of large importance-satisfaction gaps, Spring Hill's students are not as dissatisfied as the national sample of private school students. Specifically, the national gap is clearly larger than the Spring Hill gap in food selection, tuition worth, reasonableness of billing policies, and the lack of "run-around" on campus. On the other hand, our gap appears larger than national gaps in parking, security response, residence hall comfort, and weekend activities. All of the items in table 6 are "high importance" items. Spring Hill students tend to rate *all* items with higher importance than do students nationally.

Satisfaction by Gender and Ethnicity – Traditional Students

The many different demographic variables included in the SSI allow for in-depth analysis of the data. Of particular interest are differences in responses between males and females and across ethnic differences. Reflecting the Spring Hill student body, the number of responses differed greatly across these ethnic/gender categories, as seen in the following table.

**Table 7. Number of Responses by Gender and Ethnicity, Spring 2003
– All Traditional Undergraduate Students**

Ethnicity	Females	Males	Total
African-American	47	6	53
Caucasian	288	175	463
Hispanic	13	22	35
Other	5	10	15
No response/Prefer not to respond	7	8	15
Total	360	221	581

Because of small response rates, no tables are given for responses from the "other" or "no response/prefer not to respond" groups, nor from African-American males. When appropriate, results from these groups will be mentioned in the text. The tables that follow give the top 15 and bottom 10 mean scores by ethnic-gender group. Lines in bold are statements that are within that subgroup's top 15 or bottom 10, but do not carry similar rankings for all traditional students.

There are few surprises in these tables, with remarkable similarities in students' relative satisfaction levels. All groups are satisfied with the quality of instruction, the reputation of the College, a sense of care and concern for the individual, and the general maintenance of the campus. On almost all items in the survey, female students tend to give higher levels of satisfaction than do male students, especially within the same ethnic category. It should be added that female students also tend to give much higher levels of importance on each survey item (with the exception of intramural sports). Since Caucasian students dominate the overall numbers of respondents, it is not surprising that the top and bottom items for both male and female Caucasian students show little variation from students as a whole. Likewise, since the counts for Hispanic students are so small, they are the ones most likely to differ from the overall rankings.

Some results do stand out, however. Female African-American students show relatively much greater satisfaction with new student orientation than do other students (although this was among the lowest ranked items by male African-American students). Both male and female African-American students showed relatively high satisfaction with tutoring services and with the caring and helpfulness of staff. Likewise, female Hispanic students are highly satisfied with – and obviously place great importance on – elements of caring and concern for the individual. Hispanic male students show

relatively high satisfaction with library and admissions staff. Notably missing from the top items among Hispanic males, however, is the quality and nature of academic advising; the highest rated “advisor” item among Hispanic males carries a ranking of only 24th.

Table 8. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Female African-American Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=47]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
This institution has a good reputation within the community.	6.47	1	1
There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.	6.17	2	7
I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	6.13	3	7
The content of courses within my major is valuable.	6.09	4	10
My academic advisor is approachable.	6.06	5	1
Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	5.98	6	4
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	5.96	7	10
Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	5.94	8	14
My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements of my major.	5.91	9	5
Tutoring services are readily available.	5.90	10	16
The campus staff are caring and helpful.	5.89	11	18
Major requirements are clear and reasonable.	5.89	11	15
Nearly all the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	5.87	13	3
New student orientation services help students adjust to college.	5.86	14	44
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my courses is excellent.	5.85	15	10

Table 9. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Female Caucasian Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=288]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
This institution has a good reputation within the community.	6.40	1	1
My academic advisor is approachable.	6.36	2	1
Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	6.19	3	4
Nearly all the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	6.18	4	3
My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.	6.14	5	6
My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements of my major.	6.08	6	5
There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.	6.07	7	7
I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	6.06	8	7
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my courses is excellent.	6.04	9	10
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	6.01	10	10
This institution shows concern for students as individuals.	5.99	11	18
Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	5.98	12	14
The instruction in my major field is excellent.	5.98	12	9
Faculty care about me as an individual.	5.96	14	13
It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.	5.91	15	22
I can easily get involved in campus organizations.	5.91	15	20

Table 10. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Female Hispanic Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=13]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
This institution has a good reputation within the community.	6.23	1	1
My academic advisor is approachable.	6.08	2	1
My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements of my major.	6.08	2	5
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my courses is excellent.	5.92	4	10

Table 10. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Female Hispanic Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=13]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
I have adequate opportunities to become involved with volunteer service organizations and activities.	5.77	5	23
Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	5.77	5	4
Residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual.	5.73	7	56
Bookstore staff are helpful.	5.69	8	32
Academics are a priority among students at SHC.	5.62	9	36
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	5.62	9	10
Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	5.62	9	14
The instruction in my major field is excellent.	5.62	9	9
Most students feel a sense of belonging here.	5.58	13	28
Nearly all the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	5.54	14	3
It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.	5.54	14	22
I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	5.54	14	7
I can easily get involved in campus organizations.	5.54	14	20

Table 11. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Male Caucasian Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=175]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
My academic advisor is approachable.	6.22	1	1
My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements of my major.	6.03	2	5
This institution has a good reputation within the community.	5.97	3	1
My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.	5.96	4	6
Nearly all the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	5.96	4	3
The instruction in my major field is excellent.	5.95	6	9
The content of courses within my major is valuable.	5.88	7	10
I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	5.84	8	7
Computer labs are adequate and accessible.	5.80	9	17
There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.	5.80	9	7
Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	5.79	11	4
Faculty care about me as an individual.	5.76	12	13
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my courses is excellent.	5.74	13	10
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	5.73	14	10
Major requirements are clear and reasonable.	5.72	15	15

Table 12. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Male Hispanic Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=22]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
This institution has a good reputation within the community.	6.00	1	1
Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	6.00	1	4
Nearly all the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	5.95	3	3
Faculty care about me as an individual.	5.86	4	13
Rate your overall satisfaction with your experience here thus far.	5.82	5	25
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	5.77	6	10
The instruction in my major field is excellent.	5.77	6	9
I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	5.73	8	7
Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.	5.73	8	21
Library staff are helpful and approachable	5.67	10	30

Table 12. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Male Hispanic Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=22]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my courses is excellent.	5.64	11	10
Admissions staff are knowledgeable.	5.62	12	27
This institution shows concern for students as individuals.	5.59	13	18
The business office is open during hours which are convenient for most students.	5.57	14	23
The content of courses within my major is valuable.	5.55	15	10

Certain items appear among all groups in terms of dissatisfaction, with parking adequacy leading the list among every group. Similarly, relative dissatisfaction with the amount of weekend activities and with Student Government appears to have neither clear ethnic nor gender differences.

Table 13. Lowest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Female African-American Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=47]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	2.86	1	1
There are a sufficient number of weekend activities for students.	3.70	2	3
Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate space, lighting, heat, air, etc.).	4.26	3	10
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	4.36	4	2
An appreciation for cultural diversity is evident among faculty and staff.	4.40	5	42
The intercollegiate athletic programs contribute to a strong sense of school spirit.	4.51	6	5
Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.	4.54	7	3
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of under-represented populations.	4.62	8	28
So far, how has your college experience met your expectations?	4.67	9	13
There is a strong commitment to racial harmony on this campus.	4.70	10	59

Table 14. Lowest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Female Caucasian Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=288]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	2.77	1	1
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	4.43	2	2
There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.	4.62	3	8
Student activity fees are put to good use.	4.63	4	7
The intercollegiate athletic programs contribute to a strong sense of school spirit.	4.64	5	5
Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.	4.67	6	3
The Freshman Seminar was a significant help in adjusting to academics at SHC.	4.70	7	6
Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate space, lighting, heat, air, etc.).	4.77	8	10
There are a sufficient number of weekend activities for students.	4.81	9	3
Student Government as a whole serves an effective purpose on this campus.	4.84	10	9

Table 15. Lowest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Female Hispanic Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=13]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	2.15	1	1
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	3.38	2	2
Student activity fees are put to good use.	3.85	2	7
Student Government as a whole serves an effective purpose on this campus.	4.00	4	9
Channels for expressing student complaints are readily available.	4.15	5	11
There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.	4.15	5	19
In general, the college provides adequate technological support.	4.23	7	17
There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.	4.27	8	8
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of commuters.	4.31	9	14
I seldom get the “run-around” when seeking information on this campus.	4.33	9	18

Table 16. Lowest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Male Caucasian Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=175]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	2.82	1	1
Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.	4.08	2	3
There are a sufficient number of weekend activities for students.	4.11	3	3
Student Government as a whole serves an effective purpose on this campus.	4.14	4	9
The Freshman Seminar was a significant help in adjusting to academics at SHC.	4.20	4	6
The intercollegiate athletic programs contribute to a strong sense of school spirit.	4.25	6	5
There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.	4.43	7	8
Student activity fees are put to good use.	4.50	8	7
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	4.54	9	2
So far, how has your college experience met your expectations?	4.63	9	13

Table 17. Lowest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Male Hispanic Traditional Undergraduate Students [n=22]

Statement	Group Mean Satisfaction	Group Rank	All-Student Rank
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	3.00	1	1
Student activity fees are put to good use.	4.00	2	7
There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.	4.05	3	8
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	4.14	4	2
The staff in the health services area are competent.	4.45	5	47
Channels for expressing student complaints are readily available.	4.52	6	11
Billing policies are reasonable.	4.55	7	12
Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate space, lighting, heat, air, etc.).	4.57	8	10
Financial aid counselors are helpful.	4.60	9	38
The Freshman Seminar was a significant help in adjusting to academics at SHC.	4.61	10	6

One finding that is clear from the highest dissatisfaction results is that overall numbers hide the degree of discontent with the commitment to diversity on campus. Caucasian students are reasonably satisfied with efforts in this area; since they constitute the large majority of survey responses, the College does well on this item overall. However, female African-American students do not share this sense of satisfaction. Nonetheless, even among this group of students, the mean scores on these items generally (but not universally) exceed 4.5. The relative dissatisfaction among male Hispanic students with health services and with financial aid counselors is anomalous. No other groups rank these items among the least satisfied.

The 2001 survey revealed high levels of dissatisfaction among the small sample of African-American males who responded. While the response rate in the current survey is even lower, the extreme negativity seems not to be present in the current results.

Satisfaction by Class Year – Traditional Students

Responses vary a great deal across class levels (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior). As was true in the 2001 survey, freshmen women are the most satisfied gender-class level group. Unlike 2001, however, there was no clear pattern in terms of the least satisfied group – except that males were much more likely to report lower levels of satisfaction; this result is common on surveys. The following table summarizes the gender-class group that had the lowest and the highest mean score on survey items. There were a total of 92 items in the survey.

Table 18. Number of survey items with the highest or lowest mean score by gender and class level

Gender-Class Level Group	Count of items with the highest mean score	Count of items with the lowest mean score
Female freshman	63	0
Female sophomore	2	4
Female junior	9	1
Female senior	5	11
Male freshman	3	6
Male sophomore	3	17
Male junior	3	23
Male senior	4	30

The next table outlines those survey items where the range in the mean scores by gender-level group exceeded a full point, and differences among gender-class level groups are statistically significant at the 95% level. These items are sorted by the “gap” between the highest mean and the lowest mean.

Table 19. Items where the range in gender-class level group means exceeds one point

Item	Highest satisfaction		Lowest satisfaction	
	mean	group	mean	group
Student Government as a whole serves an effective purpose on this campus.	5.17	F Fr	3.62	M Sr
Student disciplinary procedures are fair.	5.60	F Fr	4.11	M Jr
Student activity fees are put to good use.	5.15	F Fr	3.69	M Jr
The student center is a comfortable place for students to spend their leisure time.	5.53	F Fr	4.18	M Jr
Residence hall regulations are reasonable.	5.64	F Fr	4.31	M Sr
Freedom of expression is protected on campus.	5.70	F Fr	4.42	M Sr
There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.	5.79	F Fr	4.52	M So
Academics are a priority among students at SHC.	5.86	F Fr	4.59	M Sr

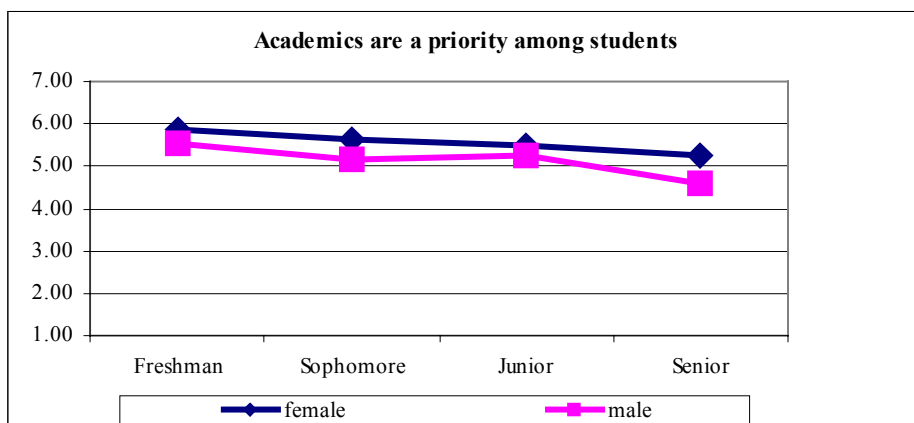
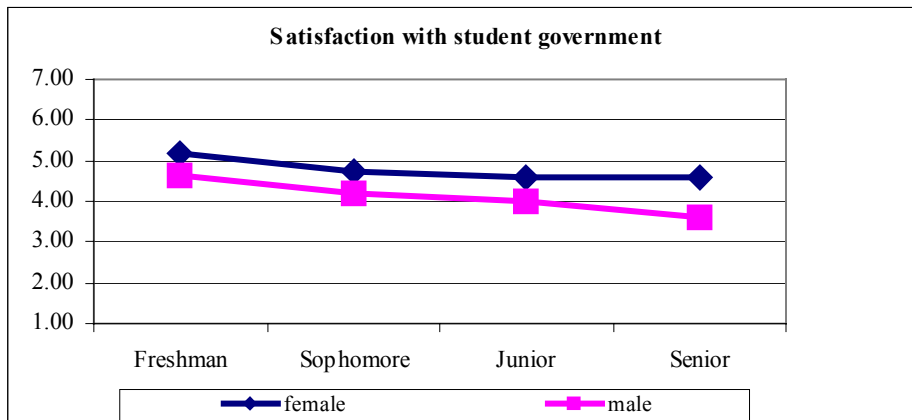
Table 19. Items where the range in gender-class level group means exceeds one point

	Highest satisfaction		Lowest satisfaction	
	Mean	Group	Mean	Group
Residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual.	5.64	M Fr	4.37	M Sr
I seldom get the “run-around” when seeking information on this campus.	5.63	F Fr	4.37	F Sr
There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria.	4.88	M Fr	3.68	M Jr
There are adequate career services to help me decide upon a career.	5.60	F Fr	4.41	F Sr
Administrators are approachable to students.	5.60	F Fr	4.44	M Jr
I feel a sense of pride about my campus.	5.98	F Fr	4.85	M Jr
The library has adequate books, periodicals, and electronic resources needed to complete assignments.	5.43	F Fr	4.34	F Sr
Security staff respond quickly in emergencies.	5.13	F Fr	4.03	M Sr
The intercollegiate athletic programs contribute to a strong sense of school spirit.	5.08	F Fr	4.00	M Jr
Channels for expressing student complaints are readily available.	5.31	F Fr	4.25	F Sr
The personnel involved in registration are helpful.	5.82	F Fr	4.79	F Sr
Tutoring services are readily available.	6.07	F Fr	5.07	M Sr

Group codes: F, M: female, male

Fr, So, Jr, Sr: freshman, sophomore, junior, senior

Two common patterns in the data are: 1) for any class level, males give lower satisfaction scores than females; and 2) for each gender, satisfaction scores tend to fall as the class level rises (from freshman to senior). It is not at all apparent that this is a “real” effect as much as it is a reflection of, essentially, “tougher grading.” However, the level of consistency of these two patterns seems more robust this year than it was in 2001. For examples of this pattern, consider the following:



This pattern is not universal – e.g., satisfaction with registration procedures is somewhat U-shaped – but it is common.

Satisfaction by Major

The Student Satisfaction Inventory contains many items about satisfaction with the academic programs and the faculty of the College. These results have more meaning when disaggregated into specific academic programs (majors and concentrations). However, several majors at Spring Hill have few students and fewer survey respondents. The next table lists all the majors/concentrations (or combinations of majors) for which there were at least five student responses. When analyzing the findings by major, bear in mind that the usefulness of responses diminishes as the group is broadened to include multiple majors

Table 20. Majors and Sample Sizes (Juniors and Seniors only)

Major/Concentration	Number of responses
Biology (except marine)	45
Biology/Marine	6
Business/Accounting	6
Business/CIS	10
Business/Finance & Economics	11
Business/International Business	5
Business/Management	13
Business/Marketing	5
Business/5-year MBA	7
Communication Arts (no concentration data)	12
English (no concentration data)	19
Graphic Arts	5
Nursing	24
Philosophy and Theology (combined)	6
Political Science	12
Psychology	19
Science – Other (Chemistry, Mathematics, Dual Degree Engineering)	7
Teacher Education/Early Childhood	8
Teacher Education/Elementary	16
Teacher Education/Secondary	13

There were 22 items in the survey that deal directly with academic programs (many others that deal more peripherally). Satisfaction on these items is overwhelmingly positive, overall. Because faculty numbers in some of the areas examined are very small – often a single person – negative findings will be presented in general terms to protect faculty identities. However, detailed results for majors in each division will be forwarded to division chairs for their use.

As was true in the 2001 survey, satisfaction with academic advising is very high and widespread. The “mean of the means” for the four advising items in the survey among all upper-level traditional undergraduates was 5.95 on a 7-point scale.² Of the 20 majors/concentrations listed above, one has a

² The four items state: “My advisor ...” 1) is approachable; 2) is concerned about the student; 3) helps students set goals; and 4) is knowledgeable about the major. The one low score will be reported to the appropriate division chair, but is not included in this document.

relatively low advising satisfaction average of 4.65, but the next-lowest advising average score was 5.10; almost half of the majors/concentrations had advising averages in excess of 6.0 (9 of 20). The following table shows the areas with the ten highest advising scores. Majors are alphabetical in case of ties.

Table 21. Most Satisfied Majors – Faculty Advising (Juniors and Seniors only – minimum of 5 responses)

Major/Concentration	Average satisfaction score on 4 advising statements
Biology/Marine	6.6
Political Science	6.6
Teacher Education/Early Childhood	6.6
English (no concentration data)	6.4
Business/International Business	6.2
Communication Arts (no concentration data)	6.2
Biology (except marine)	6.1
Philosophy and Theology (combined)	6.1
Teacher Education/Elementary	6.1
Science – Other (Chemistry, Mathematics, Dual Degree Engineering)	6.0

Eleven survey items pertain directly to the student’s satisfaction with faculty and instruction.³ The “mean of the means” for these 11 items across all upper-level undergraduates responding to the survey was 5.69. Of the 20 majors/concentrations for which we have at least 5 respondents, the lowest average was 4.96. However, 14 of the 20 majors/concentrations had composite means above 5.5 on these 11 survey items. The best composite scores appear below.

Table 22. Most Satisfied Majors – Faculty and Instruction (Juniors and Seniors only – minimum of 5 responses)

Major/Concentration	Average satisfaction score on 11 faculty and instruction statements
Political Science	6.3
Business/International Business	6.1
Teacher Education/Early Childhood	6.1
English (no concentration data)	6.0
Philosophy and Theology (combined)	6.0
Biology/Marine	5.8
Communication Arts (no concentration data)	5.8
Science – Other (Chemistry, Mathematics, Dual Degree Engineering)	5.8
Teacher Education/Elementary	5.8
Biology (except marine)	5.7
Business/Management	5.7
Business/Marketing	5.7
Psychology	5.7

³ The items are: 1) faculty care about me as an individual; 2) courses in the major are valuable; 3) instruction in the major is excellent; 4) faculty are fair and unbiased in treatment of individual students; 5) faculty provide timely feedback; 6) faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach; 7) quality of instruction in most classes is excellent; 8) adjunct faculty are competent instructors; 9) faculty are usually available after class and during office hours; 10) nearly all faculty are knowledgeable in their field; and 11) appreciation for cultural diversity is evident among faculty and staff.

Satisfaction by Residence Hall/Commuter – Traditional Students

Because many items on the Student Satisfaction Inventory pertain to campus life, especially residence life, we asked students to tell us what residence hall they lived in. The number of students by gender responding is shown below. Note the survey allowed only up to six responses on the field in question, requiring the combining of Toolen and Walsh residents. Commuters were derived from a separate question about the nature of a student’s residence (residence hall, own home, live with parents, etc.).

Table 23. Number of Responses by Residence and Gender – Traditional Students Only

Residence	female	male	Total
Commuter	84	59	143
Fairway Apts	62	7	69
Mobile Hall	27	29	56
Murray Hall	26	15	41
Viragh Hall	40	26	66
O’Leary Hall	18	12	30
Toolen/Walsh Halls	86	47	133
Total	343	195	538

Some items show great similarity in response, regardless of gender or residence of the student. In other cases, some interesting patterns emerge.

Parking and Security. Dissatisfaction with parking is universal. The mean scores on the “adequacy of parking” item range from the best response of 4.0 among O’Leary women, to the lowest mark of 1.50 among Murray males. Surprisingly, concern with parking lot lighting is not concentrated among female students. The two areas showing the highest dissatisfaction with parking lot lighting and security are residents in Fairways Apartments and in Viragh Hall. These two groups also show the most dissatisfaction with campus security response to emergencies.

Table 24. Parking Dissatisfaction – Traditional Students

Residence	Parking Adequacy mean score		Parking Lot Lighting & Security mean score	
	female	male	female	male
Commuter	2.95	3.35	4.81	5.37
Fairway Apts	2.66	2.43	3.69	4.00
Mobile Hall	3.42	2.71	4.63	3.64
Murray Hall	1.85	1.50	4.04	4.36
Viragh Hall	2.25	2.60	3.68	3.96
O’Leary Hall	4.00	2.90	5.00	4.09
Toolen/Walsh Halls	2.71	3.05	4.72	4.30

Residence Hall Comfort. Most of the mean responses to the question about housing comfort show improvement from the 2001 survey.⁴ This is most noticeable among Mobile Hall women, Murray Hall men, and both men and women in either Toolen or Walsh Halls. Satisfaction with the Fairways Apartments is largely unchanged. Satisfaction with O’Leary has slipped slightly, but still remains high compared to most of the other residence halls. The numbers on the new Viragh Hall are very good

⁴ The full statement was, “Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate space, lighting, heat, air conditioning, telephones, etc.).”

overall. The national mean score for four-year private institutions is 4.40, so Spring Hill results are very solid overall [our mean among traditional students is 4.71].

Table 25. Satisfaction with Residence Hall Comfort – Traditional Students

Residence	2001: female	2003: female	2001: male	2003: male
Fairway Apts	4.35	4.29	4.71	4.57
Mobile Hall	3.72	4.52	4.05	4.17
Murray Hall	4.17	4.27	4.00	4.54
Viragh Hall		4.95		5.19
O’Leary Hall	5.38	4.94	5.83	5.67
Toolen/Walsh Halls	4.26	4.79	3.67	4.80

Residence Hall Staff. Overall satisfaction with residence hall staff is high [“Residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual.”] The lowest mean score on this item for any residence-gender group is 4.86; the highest group has a mean of 5.85 [Toolen/Walsh men]. Other means in excess of 5.5 come from women in Mobile, O’Leary, and Toolen/Walsh Halls.

Knowing “What’s Happening.” Responses to the item “I generally know what’s happening on campus” show sharp differences between commuter students and residents. It should be noted that the survey was taken before *The Springhillian* ran a series of articles on issues facing commuter students.

Table 26. Satisfaction with Knowing “What’s Happening on Campus” – Traditional Students, mean score

	female	male
Commuter	4.53	4.14
Resident	5.67	5.47

Satisfaction of Lifelong Learning and Graduate Students

Levels of student satisfaction are extraordinarily high among both Lifelong Learning and graduate students.⁵ Among Lifelong Learning students, there were 48 data items with mean satisfaction scores of at least 5.5; this is well over half of the questions asked. Perhaps most notable is that the “would you enroll here again” statement received the highest satisfaction score, a mean of 6.4 [7 = “definitely yes”, and 6 = “probably yes”], and an “overall satisfaction” question received the fourth highest score. Table 27 lists all items with means of at least 5.5 for Lifelong Learning undergraduates.

Table 27. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Lifelong Learning Undergraduate Students

Statement	Mean satisfaction	Rank
All in all, if you had it to do over, would you enroll here?	6.40	1
This institution has a good reputation within the community.	6.32	2
Academics are a priority among students at SHC.	6.02	3
Rate your overall satisfaction with your experience here thus far.	5.98	4
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	5.98	4
The student handbook provides helpful information about campus life.	5.98	4
Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	5.96	7
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my courses is excellent.	5.96	7

⁵ Because of the way questions were asked and coded, there is no clear indicator of who constitutes a Lifelong Learning student. Generally, all students reporting themselves as “evening” but not as “graduate” were counted as Lifelong Learning.

Table 27. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Lifelong Learning Undergraduate Students

Statement	Mean satisfaction	Rank
Major requirements are clear and reasonable.	5.95	9
Bookstore staff are helpful.	5.93	10
Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	5.93	10
There is a strong commitment to racial harmony on this campus.	5.92	12
Faculty care about me as an individual.	5.91	13
There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.	5.88	14
The campus staff are caring and helpful.	5.86	15
This institution shows concern for students as individuals.	5.86	15
I feel sense of pride about my campus.	5.84	17
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of part-time students.	5.82	18
Nearly all the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	5.81	19
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of evening students.	5.81	19
It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.	5.81	19
Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.	5.80	22
The instruction in my major field is excellent.	5.79	23
I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	5.78	24
Financial aid counselors are helpful.	5.78	24
Most students feel a sense of belonging here.	5.77	26
My academic advisor is approachable.	5.75	27
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of older, returning learners.	5.75	27
In general, the college provides adequate technological support.	5.73	29
Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.	5.73	29
Admissions staff are knowledgeable.	5.69	31
The campus is safe and secure for all students.	5.69	31
An appreciation for cultural diversity is evident among faculty and staff.	5.67	33
The content of courses within my major is valuable.	5.67	33
Financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in college planning.	5.67	33
Class change (Drop/add) policies are reasonable.	5.67	33
Adjunct faculty are competent as classroom instructors.	5.66	37
The assessment and course placement procedures are reasonable.	5.65	38
I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.	5.64	39
The library has adequate books, periodicals, and electronic resources needed to complete assignments.	5.61	40
Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course.	5.60	41
The personnel involved in registration are helpful.	5.59	42
Student disciplinary procedures are fair.	5.59	42
Administrators are approachable to students.	5.56	44
My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.	5.53	45
I seldom get the “run-around” when seeking information on this campus.	5.53	45
The business office is open during hours which are convenient for most students.	5.52	47
Computer labs are adequate and accessible.	5.50	48

Table 28 lists all survey items with graduate student means of 5.5 or higher. With nine items having means above 6.0 and 41 items with means above 5.5, these are also excellent outcomes. As was true of Lifelong Learning students, graduate students gave their highest level of satisfaction on the “would you enroll here again” question.

Table 28. Highest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Graduate Students

Statement	Mean satisfaction	Rank
All in all, if you had it to do over, would you enroll here?	6.34	1
My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major.	6.29	2
I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	6.24	3
This institution has a good reputation within the community.	6.21	4
My academic advisor is approachable.	6.17	5
Nearly all the faculty are knowledgeable in their field.	6.14	6
There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus.	6.12	7
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my courses is excellent.	6.12	7
Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours.	6.06	9
My academic advisor is concerned about my success as an individual.	5.98	10
I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.	5.98	10
Rate your overall satisfaction with your experience here thus far.	5.96	12
The instruction in my major field is excellent.	5.96	12
It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus.	5.94	14
The campus staff are caring and helpful.	5.90	15
The campus is safe and secure for all students.	5.90	15
Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment.	5.88	17
Major requirements are clear and reasonable.	5.86	18
The content of courses within my major is valuable.	5.85	19
I feel a sense of pride about my campus.	5.83	20
This institution shows concern for students as individuals.	5.82	21
Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	5.82	21
Faculty care about me as an individual.	5.81	23
My academic advisor helps me set goals to work toward.	5.74	24
Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.	5.73	25
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of evening students.	5.71	26
Freedom of expression is protected on campus.	5.66	27
The assessment and course placement procedures are reasonable.	5.63	28
Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course.	5.63	28
There is a strong commitment to racial harmony on this campus.	5.62	30
Academics are a priority among students at SHC.	5.59	31
I seldom get the “run-around” when seeking information on this campus.	5.57	32
Admissions counselors respond to prospective students’ unique needs and requests.	5.57	32
Administrators are approachable to students.	5.56	34
On the whole, the campus is well-maintained.	5.56	34
Satisfaction that the campus demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of part-time students.	5.56	34
The personnel involved in registration are helpful.	5.55	37
The student handbook provides helpful information about campus life.	5.54	38
An appreciation for cultural diversity is evident among faculty and staff.	5.53	39
Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.	5.52	40
Admissions staff are knowledgeable.	5.51	41

In comparison to Lifelong Learning students, graduate students tended to show higher satisfaction with their advisor. The highest-ranked statement pertaining to advising among Lifelong Learning students was satisfaction that the advisor was “approachable” (with a very respectable mean of 5.75, and a ranking as the 27th highest level of satisfaction among the statements asked). Graduate students, however, placed three different advising-related statements among their “top 10” satisfaction statements.

Many of the survey questions are not applicable to evening and graduate students. Analysis of the survey results clearly indicate that students took one of two approaches to “not applicable” questions: they either left the item blank, or they scored the item as a “4” or “neutral” response. Among those items with higher response rates, the following statements scored lowest among Lifelong Learning and graduate students. Only items with means below 5.0 are listed.

Table 29. Lowest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Lifelong Learning Students (minimum of 35 responses)

Statement	Mean satisfaction	Rank
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	4.64	1
A variety of intramural activities are offered.	4.82	2
I can easily get involved in campus organizations.	4.83	3
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	4.93	4

Table 30. Lowest Level of Satisfaction, Spring 2003 – Graduate Students (minimum of 35 responses)

Statement	Mean satisfaction	Rank
The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate.	3.96	1
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	4.39	2
I generally know what’s happening on campus.	4.72	3

These responses show very little dissatisfaction among nontraditional students at Spring Hill College. The parking situation among graduate students appears of greater concern than among Lifelong Learning students, probably because of the heavier use of Murray and Yenni Hall lots by the former; there was heavy construction in both areas during much of the last academic year. However, the parking responses are better than found among traditional students.

Although satisfaction levels among nontraditional students are extremely high, they are not as good as recorded among the same students in the 2001 survey. In that survey, there were 40 statements receiving mean scores of 5.8 or higher among Lifelong Learning students; in the 2003 survey, means among the same population were 5.8 or higher on only 22 items. The next two tables outline the areas of significant change between the two surveys.

Table 31. Largest Improvement in Mean Satisfaction Scores, 2001 to 2003 – Lifelong Learning Students (at least 35 responses in 2003)

Statement	1999 mean	2001 mean	2003 mean	2003 minus 2001	2003 minus 1999
Bookstore staff are helpful.	5.25	5.27	5.93	0.66***	0.68***

*** significant at the .99 level

Among those statements receiving at least 35 responses from Lifelong Learning students in 2003, the statement pertaining to bookstore satisfaction is the only one with a significant improvement in satisfaction scores. This is true for both 2001 to 2003 and 1999 to 2003 comparisons. This finding supports the turnaround in bookstore satisfaction also found among the traditional student population.

Because the overall results for Lifelong Learning students were so very high in the 2001 survey, it is not surprising that there were several items with significant declines in mean satisfaction between the 2001 and the 2003 surveys. The following table reports those items with declines in satisfaction that are significant at the 95% level.

Table 32. Largest Declines in Mean Satisfaction Scores, 2001 to 2003 – Lifelong Learning Students (at least 35 responses in 2003)

Statement	1999 mean	2001 mean	2003 mean	2003 minus 2001	2003 minus 1999
Billing policies are reasonable.	5.32	5.87	5.23	-0.64***	-0.09
Parking lots are well-lighted and secure.	4.64	5.53	4.93	-0.60**	0.29
Library staff are helpful and approachable.	5.26	5.90	5.36	-0.54**	0.10
The personnel involved in registration are helpful.	5.93	6.09	5.59	-0.50**	-0.34
Financial aid counselors are helpful.	5.65	6.22	5.78	-0.44**	0.13
The content of the courses within my major is valuable.	5.63	6.09	5.67	-0.43**	0.04

*** significant at the .99 level

** significant at the .95 level

Of the six items showing significant declines in satisfaction between 2001 and 2003, only one also has a relatively large (but not statistically significant) decline between 1999 and 2003: the helpfulness of personnel involved in registration. Before assuming that the registration process needs another look, notice that even after these declines, the 2003 mean of 5.59 on this item shows a very high level of satisfaction. There were five survey items showing significant declines in satisfaction between 1999 and 2003, but on none of these items were there also significant declines from 2001 to 2003.

Graduate responses show no items with significant improvement or decline in satisfaction between the 2001 and 2003 surveys (given at least 35 responses in 2003). The surveys suggest there might be slightly less satisfaction in the helpfulness of financial aid counseling; the mean fell from 5.81 in 2001 to 5.15 in 2003. This drop is statistically significant (95%), but there were only 34 responses in 2003.

Satisfaction among Lifelong Learning students shows little variation by gender. However, on three items, females show significantly (95% level) higher levels of satisfaction than males: quality of instruction in classes; competence of adjunct instructors; and commitment to Catholic/Jesuit values. However, none of the mean scores on these items suggest problems.

As was true with the 2001 survey, graduate students showed more variation by gender. In every case of significant differences, males showed more dissatisfaction than females. Because there are strong gender differences between programs, it is virtually impossible to know if these differences are due to males “grading harder” (known to be the case), or due to programmatic differences. Of 66 survey items with at least 30 responses, females had higher mean scores than men on 62% of items within the MBA program, 77% of the items within the theology programs, and 47% of the items within the teacher education program. This suggests some gender differences in the answers. No males responded from the MLA program.

Within each graduate program, females have a more positive sense of “belonging,” higher satisfaction with library services and resources, and higher satisfaction with parking adequacy. On the other hand and not surprisingly, women tended to express less satisfaction with lighting and security of parking areas. However, none of these differences are strong.

Concluding Comments

Overall, the results from the 2003 SSI show a very positive attitude of students toward the Spring Hill College experience. The survey validates some of the changes that have been made since 2001.

While detailed analysis of the data reveals some strengths and weaknesses that deserve more attention, the bottom line is that the campus community can take pride in the quality of the entire educational experience offered to our students.