

**Student Opinion Survey (SOS)
Fall 2004 - Spring 2005
Executive Summary**

**Office of Institutional Research
August 2005**

The Student Opinion Survey (SOS) was administered to 1,567 Spring 2005 course sections, including distance learning and web-based classes, during March 2005, with the results aggregated and emailed to deans and department heads in July 2005. A total of 33,852 survey forms were distributed through faculty, who were given sealed packages of forms and instructions for their classes. 131 sections with three or less students were not surveyed because of concerns with individual identification as defined under the Privacy Act. As the survey is meant to be administered during a single class session, only those students in attendance on that particular day completed the survey. A total of 20,968 completed forms (those answering at least four questions) were returned to the IR Office from 1,299 sections for processing, for a total response rate of 61.9% for completed forms. Approximately 18% of section envelopes were not returned.

The survey, a standardized locally developed instrument, queries all undergraduate and graduate students in all colleges on their opinions on seventeen statements, with a Likert scale ranging from (1) meaning “strongly disagree” to (5) for “strongly agree.” A 4.75 rating, therefore, would suggest that students overall “strongly agree” with a particular statement. However, the reader should note that comparing results between colleges, departments, or program is difficult due to the sample sizes for each unit. For example, one program might cumulate responses from only one or two class sections, whereas another might cumulate responses from forty or more sections.

The core Spring 2005 SOS statements were as follows:

1. The instructor had a good command of the subject matter.
2. The instructor was aware when students failed to keep up in class.
3. The instructor stimulated intellectual curiosity.
4. The instructor seemed to enjoy teaching.
5. The instructor clearly defined student responsibilities in the course.
6. The instructor was well-prepared for each day’s classes.
7. The instructor made clear explanations.
8. The instructor had a good vocal delivery.
9. The instructor was accessible to students outside regular class hours.
10. Grading in the course was fair.
11. The instructor was prompt in returning assignments and tests.
12. The instructor motivated students to do their best work.
13. The instructor accomplished what he or she set out to do.
14. The instructor took students seriously.
15. This course challenged students intellectually.
16. The relationship between instructor and students contributed to a good learning situation.
17. I expect to receive the following grade in this course (A/B/C/D/F)

As can be noted on the Results page, the College of Education received the highest rating (4.52) in its category, followed by the College of Agriculture and Human Sciences and the Developmental Studies program. The ratings are as would be expected: the course evaluation literature indicates that required courses and courses in professional schools

(e.g., Engineering and Business) receive harsher ratings from students than do non-required courses and courses taken in non-professional schools. When one looks at departmental ratings, Army ROTC lead the list, followed by the Department of Health and Human Performance and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. As there are too many distinct courses to summarize separately in this executive summary, we have ranked programs instead. That is, any class section regardless of level (1000, 2000, etc.) is cumulated under one program heading.

When examining ratings for individual statements concerning the faculty in general, the survey notes that the highest level of satisfaction (5) was for the statement “The instructor seemed to enjoy teaching”. The next highest ranked satisfaction levels, in descending order, are “The instructor had a good command of the subject matter”, “The instructor took students seriously”, and “The instructor had a good vocal delivery”. It should also be noted that ratings below 2.0 were relatively rare on all questions. Overall, students report high levels of satisfaction with instruction which generally agrees with results from the Graduating Students’ Opinion Survey.

Deans and department heads currently have copies of reports on individual faculty members. An electronic spreadsheet of the full report is on file in the Office of Institutional Research.

If you have questions concerning the survey, please contact Jerry Gaither, Director of the Office of Institutional Research, at (936) 857-2448 or ghgaither@pvamu.edu.