



Summary of Responses

to

Tenth Senate Survey

Administered
Spring 2003

Administrative Review Committee of the University Senate
Stony Brook University

Survey Analysis

The University Senate Administrative Review Committee (ARC) has assembled and analyzed the results of the Tenth Survey of Faculty and Professional Staff regarding Stony Brook Administrators and Services. This document contains a discussion of the results.

The survey was conducted at the end of the spring 2003 semester using a Web-based survey instrument. The survey was announced in various University settings, notably the weekly e-mail Campus Events notice. In the interest of making the survey easily available, there were no overly restrictive security controls on the survey. Hence, there is the possibility that some survey responses were completed by individuals not included in the faculty and professional staff group. Moreover, there was no control to prevent an individual from submitting multiple responses. The overriding concerns of the committee were in preserving the anonymity of the responders and encouraging a representative set of responses.

As shown in Table 1, there were a total of 579 responses, including 238 from faculty and 286 professional staff, with the remainder either unassigned or other. Since the survey was conducted on-line, an exact determination of the response rate is not possible. However, based on the size of the target audience, the response rate is comparable to the response rate of prior surveys. Although this is a small sample, we have no reason to believe it is generally unrepresentative. However, the results may be affected by exceptionally high response rates in some areas (such as the Melville and Branch Libraries) and low rates in others (such as hospital administration).

Table 1 - Survey respondents

	Faculty	Prof. Staff	Other	No designation	Total
College of Arts and Sciences	107	40	3	34	184
College of Engineering and Harriman School	28	9		1	38
HSC Library	2				2
Hospital Administration	1	36		1	38
Marine Sciences Research Center	7	2	1		10
Melville Library and Branch Libraries	13	20			33
Non-academic area reporting to a VP other than the Provost or the President		60	2	2	64
Other	3	50	2	2	57
Other Academic or Non-Academic Area (reporting to the Provost)		26			26
Physical Education and Athletics	5	2			7
School of Dental Medicine	6	5		1	12
School of Health Technology and Management	9	3			12
School of Medicine	51	26		6	83
School of Nursing	2	1			3
School of Professional Development		3			3
School of Social Welfare	4	3			7
Total	238	286	8	47	579

The survey was similar to the previous survey¹, with questions updated to reflect changes in the campus administration and services. This approach allowed us to compare many of the responses with those of the previous survey.

Respondents were asked to evaluate the various aspects of Stony Brook's administrators and services on a scale of A=excellent, B=good, C=fair, D=poor, and E=fail. These were then converted to numerical scores of 4 through 0 respectively. The survey was anonymous. There was no request for identifying information and comments were carefully screened to eliminate information that could identify the responder.

As compared with the previous survey, many individual measures increased, though some declined. Overall, the 2003 results indicate a considerable improvement, as compared with the results of the 1997 survey. The average rating of all responses to questions was 2.30 in the 2003 survey, while the overall response score was 2.0 in the previous survey.

For the questions that concern the various offices and services on campus, the highest scores, 2.8 or higher, were in response to:

What is your opinion of:

- The electronic mail system you use?
- Day care or other campus child-care facilities?
- Provost's ethical and professional standards?
- VP, Student Affairs leadership on affirmative action?
- VP, Research ethical and professional standards?
- Dean, College of Arts and Sciences academic leadership and ethical and professional standards?
- Aggregate ranking of Dean, Engineering and Applied Sciences (9 out of 10 responses over 2.8)?

For the questions that concern the various offices and services on campus, the lowest scores (1.6 or lower), were received for the items:

What is your opinion of:

- Quality of building maintenance?
- Quality of elevator maintenance?
- Quality of air conditioning and heating maintenance?
- Response to repair and rehabilitation orders?
- OASIS system? (overall lowest score)
- President's involvement of faculty and staff in decisions that affect policy?
- Aggregate rating of Dean, Melville Library and Branch Libraries (10 out of 10 categories below 1.6)?
- Dean, School of Medicine (8 of 10 categories below 1.6)?

¹ Ninth Survey of Faculty and Professional Staff Regarding Stony Brook Administrators and Services, University Senate Administrative Review Committee, SUNY Stony Brook, Spring 1997

Summary of Survey Results for General Sections

This section summarizes the results of the general sections of the survey. That is, the results that do not refer to named individuals.

The results showed a wide range of results from Maintenance with a score of 1.74 (fair to poor) to Personnel Services with a score of 2.70 (good to fair).

I. General (4 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 1.98 with a range from 1.74 (*extent to which SB administration is in touch with the nature of everyday life as experienced by the rest of the SB community*) to 2.28 (*effectiveness of affirmative action procedures*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.4 to 2.1.

The responses to all questions in this category were higher than the scores of the corresponding responses in the 1997 survey.

II. Maintenance (7 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 1.74 with a range from 1.49 (*quality of air conditioning and heating maintenance*) to 2.32 (*quality of grounds maintenance*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.3 to 1.7, while the average rating to these questions was 1.5.

Of note is the increase in the rating of the grounds, which received a score of 1.7 in the 1997 survey. Also of note are the overall low scores in this category. With the exception of the grounds maintenance question, scores for each of the questions were in the fair to poor range. Moreover, the average of all scores in this category was the lowest among the non-individual category responses.

III. Administration and General Services (23 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.51 with a range from 1.82 (*parking enforcement procedures*) to 3.13 (*electronic mail system you use*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.2 to 1.8, while the average rating to these questions was 2.2.

Of note is the overall improvement in this category, as compared with 1997 results. The only responses in this group that were in the fair to poor range were parking facilities (1.98) and parking enforcement procedures (1.82). Recently expanded campus services such as e-mail and day-care received particularly high scores.

IV. Personnel Services (4 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.70 with a range from 2.56 (*Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action*) to 2.78 (*Payroll and Employee Benefits Offices*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 2.2 to 2.7, while the average rating to these questions was 2.5.

Of note is the overall improvement in this category, as compared with 1997 results.

V. Academic Services and Facilities (26 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.57 with a range from 1.99 (*University policies for financial support of graduate students*) to 2.87 (*facilities of the HSC Library*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.8 to 2.9, while the average rating to these questions was 2.3.

Of note is the overall improvement in this category, as compared with the 1997 results. Also of note are the two low scoring categories: residence hall services and facilities (2.22) and University policies for financial support of graduate students (1.99).

VI. Academic Governance and Administration (7 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 1.93 with a range from 1.73 (*effectiveness of the University Senate in representing student concerns and effectiveness of the Professional Employees Governing Board*) to 2.40 (*influence of faculty or professional staff on decision making within your department*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.4 to 2.1, while the average rating to these questions was 1.7.

Of note is the overall improvement in this category, as compared with the 1997 results. However, the scores in this category are still low. With the exception of the effectiveness of the Graduate School in enhancing graduate education (2.16) and the influence of faculty or professional staff on decision making within your department (2.40), all the scores were in the fair to poor range.

VII. Research Administration (8 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.29 with a range from 1.17 (*Oasis system*) to 2.61 (*Research Foundation purchasing*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 2.3 to 2.8, while the average rating to these questions was 2.6.

Of note is the decline in the average rating for this category from 2.8 in 1997 to 2.29 in 2003. Even discounting the dismal response for the Oasis system, the unweighted average score in this category was lower than the score in 1997.

Summary of Survey Results for Administrative Officers

I. President Shirley Strum Kenny (12 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.28 with a range from 1.56 (*President's involvement of faculty and staff in decisions that affect policy*) to 2.64 (*President's representation of the University to the outside community*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.6 to 2.4, while the average rating to these questions was 1.9.

Of note is the overall improvement in this category, as compared with the 1997 results. President Kenny's average score is at the survey average (2.28 vs. 2.30) and in the fair to good range. The lowest and highest scoring questions in the 1997 survey were the same as the 2003 survey.

II. Provost Robert McGrath (12 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.34 with a range from 2.04 (*Provost's involvement of faculty and staff in decisions that affect policy*) to 2.81 (*Provost's ethical and professional standards*). The range for similar questions in 1997 (for Provost Rollin Richmond) was 1.7 to 2.5, while the average rating to these questions was 2.1.

Of note is the overall improvement in this category, as compared with the 1997 results. Provost McGrath's average score is at the survey average (2.34 vs. 2.30) and in the fair to good range. The two questions with results in the fair to poor range were Provost's budgetary decisions (1.88) and Provost's involvement of faculty and staff in decisions that affect policy (1.56).

III. VP for Administration, Richard Mann (12 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.09 with a range from 1.76 (*Admin's involvement of faculty and staff in decisions that affect policy*) to 2.37 (*Admin's ethical and professional standards*). We cannot make a meaningful comparison between this category and the scores of the previous survey since in 1997, Ceil Cleveland was the VP for University Affairs, and the responsibilities of the two offices are markedly different. The three questions with results in the fair to poor range are academic leadership (1.99), leadership in improving the intellectual climate (1.97), and involvement of faculty staff in decisions that affect policy (1.76).

The scores in this category are below the survey average, although slightly above the fair level. The lowest scoring question in that survey concerned development of new resources. The score of that category increased from 1.0 to 2.02.

IV. VP for Advancement (9 questions)

This position is not staffed at the current time.

V. VP for Student Affairs, Frederick Preston (7 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.65 with a range from 2.42 (*involvement of faculty, staff, and students in decisions that affect policy*) to 2.87 (*leadership on affirmative action*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 2.3 to 2.8, while the average rating to these questions was 2.4.

Of note is the overall improvement in this category, as compared with the 1997 results. The results are above the survey average, and in the fair to good range.

VI. VP HSC, Norman Edelman (10 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 1.85 with a range from 1.72 (*development of new resources*) to 2.20 (*ethical and professional standards*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.4 to 2.1, while the average rating to these questions was 1.7.

Of note are the low overall scores in this category and the slight improvement, as compared with the 1997 results. The average score for this category is below the survey average, and in the fair to poor range. With the exception of the leadership on affirmative action (2.03) and the ethical and professional standards (2.20), all the scores were in the fair to poor range.

VII. VP for Research, Gail Habicht (7 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.53 with a range from 2.32 (*involvement of faculty and staff in decisions affecting policy*) to 2.86 (*ethical and professional standards*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.8 to 2.6, while the average rating to these questions was 2.3.

Of note is the slight improvement in this category, as compared with the 1997 results. The average score in this category is above the survey average and in the good to fair range.

VIII. Dean of the Graduate School, Lawrence Martin (7 questions)

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.28 with a range from 2.05 (*involvement of faculty, staff, and students in decisions they affect policy*) to 2.56 (*ethical and professional standards*).

There was no equivalent category in the 1997 survey, but there were two questions included in the previous survey concerning the effectiveness of the Graduate School. The questions addressed the effectiveness of the Graduate School in enhancing graduate education and University policies for financial support of graduate students. In both categories, the scores improved from 1.8 in the 1997 survey to 2.0 and 2.2 in the 2003 survey.

IX. College Deans (10 questions)

Results for the Deans of Colleges are aggregated below and summarized separately for those Deans with more than 25 responders.

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.32 with a range from 2.07 (*involvement of faculty, staff, and students in decisions that affect policy*) to 2.65 (*ethical and professional standards*).

The scores for the individual Deans are given in Table 2.

Table 2 - Ratings for Individual Deans

Dean	School, College, etc.	Average	Range	Average # Responses
James Staros	College of Arts and Sciences	2.68	2.51 – 3.14	99
Yacov Shamash	College of Engineering and Applied Sciences Harriman School	3.14	2.61 – 3.38	31
Chris Filstrup	Melville Library and Branch Libraries	1.04	.90 – 1.23	29
Norman Edelman	School of Medicine	1.35	1.08 – 1.78	49

1. College of Arts and Sciences

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 2.7 with a range from 2.5 (*involvement of faculty and staff in decisions affecting policy, budgetary decisions, and development of new resources*) to 3.1 (*ethical and professional standards*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.7 to 2.8, while the average rating to these questions was 2.4.

Of note is the improvement in this category, as compared with the 1997 results for the previous Dean. Dean Staros' average score is above the survey average and in the good to fair range.

2. College of Engineering and Harriman School

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 3.1 with a range from 2.6 (*involvement of faculty and staff in decisions affecting policy*) to 3.4 (*ethical and professional standards*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.5 to 2.6, while the average rating to these questions was 2.0.

Of note is the marked improvement in all categories, as compared with the 1997 results. Dean Shamash's average score is well above the survey average and in the good to excellent range.

3. Melville Library and Branch Libraries

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 1.04 with a range from .85 (*leadership on affirmative action*) to 1.23 (*accessibility and responsiveness*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.9 to 2.9, while the average rating to these questions was 2.5.

The survey also included five questions relating to library services. All survey responders were able to respond to these questions. The average score for library services in the 2003 survey was 2.57 as compared with the average score of 2.46 in the 1997 survey. This average score for library services is above the 2003 survey average and in the good to fair range.

Of note is the substantial decline in ratings for all categories in the Dean specific scores, as compared with the 1997 results for the previous Dean. Dean Filstrup's average score is well below the survey average and slightly above the poor level. Another point to note is the large difference between the ratings of the Dean of Libraries as compared with the rating of library services. The survey contained five questions available to all responders, relating to the services and facilities of the library. The responses to these questions were above the survey average, indicating satisfaction with the library facility and services among the University faculty and staff. However, the responses from the staff working in the library were much lower.

4. School of Medicine

The average rating of all responses to these questions was 1.4 with a range from 1.1 (*involvement of faculty and staff in decisions affecting policy*) to 1.8 (*ethical and professional standards*). The range for similar questions in 1997 was 1.4 to 2.1, while the average rating to these questions was 1.7.

Of note is the decline in ratings for all categories, as compared with the 1997 results. Dean Edelman's average score is well below the survey average and in the poor to fair range.

Selected Comments

A large percentage of the survey responses (138/579) included comments, most of them detailed. Any information in the comments that would allow the comment to be attributed to the responder was removed. The comments were classified according to the affected individuals and/or organizations, and distributed to those individuals and organizations. Portions of representative comments are listed below.

Although the numerical survey responses suggest improvements in many campus units, not surprisingly, the written comments focus on areas of dissatisfaction.

Administration

Concerning administration, two themes that emerged most strongly from the survey are the poor scores concerning the administration of the Melville Library and the lack of involvement of faculty and staff in decisions that affect policy. Both of those themes along with others are reflected in the comments below.

Generally, I feel as if the administration doesn't seem to communicate with the faculty at all, i.e. I only ever hear about potential changes through rumors, rather than through open letters from the administrators involved, which would be much better. I strongly suggest that administrators take the time to write letters to faculty, first, asking for feedback about upcoming decisions, and second, informing faculty about what decisions end up being made.

University Administration has overlooked the adult student returning to school. There are classes and curriculums that are not offered in the evenings.

In general, I believe that President Kenny generally has good judgment and makes correct decisions. However, her inability to truly consult prior to making these decisions detracts from the benefit of these additional viewpoints to further enhance the consequences of these decisions and the serious commitment of faculty and staff to carry out them out.

The staff in the administration building whether it be Financial Aid, Records, or Bursar do not do their jobs correctly and frankly do not care to correct mistakes or apologize for what they did wrong. They have an attitude of not caring to get the job done right and in a timely fashion.

The Dean of Frank Melville, Jr. Library is nearly totalitarian in his measures and policies. He often employs biting sarcasm to accompany his condescending attitude. His philosophy "what the market will bear" often shows callousness for his already overworked staff. While attempting to bring faculty and staff together on equal ground and reach consensus, his efforts have the opposite effect due to the methods and attitude he employs.

Many students have complained about the Long Waits to see a counselor. The office is too small. The advisors need training in assisting the students beyond looking at the computer screen. The "counseling" aspect of their position is missing. Students need help in understanding the process and steps to acquiring financial aid, loans, etc. Maybe a guide can be written to assist students.

Academic Administration

Concerning the administration of education, two themes that emerged from the survey are the poor scores concerning the administration of the Medical School and the policies for graduate stipends. Both of those themes along with others are reflected in the comments below.

The Med School is a mess. The Alternative Medicine, Cancer, and Heart Centers are all failures and the Department of Medicine is falling apart with many of its best faculty leaving Stony Brook. The Medical School is now in a position where it will now take years to recover back where we were just 6 years ago. We have had a Dean search for the last 18 months... Things have only gotten worse. Good candidates will not come to Stony Brook under this current leadership.

The biggest single problem facing graduate education is that stipends are abysmally low, especially given cost of living here. If tuition funds are to be charged to grants, then these monies should be returned to the department that generated them, where they could be used to supplement stipends. Now that many building projects are complete and campus looks much nicer, it's time to pay attention to faculty recruitment.

As a member of the faculty of the HSC-School of Medicine, I am concerned about the lack of progress in the search for a new Dean and the disarray within the school and its departments. I am very concerned about the interactions within my Department and the Dean's and President's offices. ... I do not see a clear vision regarding the goals of the medical school as far as recruiting and promotion or a clear understanding of what it means to be a member of the faculty. I see little support for academic pursuits or support of our teaching mission.

Facilities

While there were many positive comments concerning recent improvements in the facilities and the grounds, there were still many suggestions for improvements. A representative set of such comments are listed below.

While there are numerous areas that can be improved, one chronic problem on the west campus is the lack of community and lack of casual people-spaces and facilities that foster people-interaction, invite casual meeting, conversation, exchange of ideas: casual, cozy facilities similar to Starbucks.

The university must maintain the grounds and buildings better. Replacing concrete and asphalt with stone walkways would help. Allowing alumni to buy bricks/stones for the sidewalks might work.

Isn't there any way, even in this terrible financial situation, that anything can be done about the tremendous amount of litter, especially cigarette butts, all over the campus?

I must say that the grounds of the University are particularly nice. Compared to several years ago this place was a mess. It is a pleasure to walk around campus now, and very inviting.

The disabled access throughout the campus is in constant disrepair especially the push button doors and ramp areas are often badly flooded rendering them inaccessible as well as not being cleared of snow and ice in a timely manner. The response to the major snow storm this past winter was very bad. Cleanup should begin during the storm not after it's over when the task is much more difficult.

My low rating on maintenance of laboratories refers to teaching labs. Research labs have it better.

Our top 4 domestic candidates accepted offers at other Universities with better affordable (subsidized) graduate housing. Students new to the area should be entitled to a private room on campus at a reasonable cost in proportion to their stipend. Instead, we have to direct them to illegal housing close to a Suffolk County bus stop. The only on-campus option for new grad students is to share a ... 3 bedroom Chapin apartment with 5 other students.

Cost of campus day care is now so impossibly high that it is way out of the reach of most of the faculty it is supposed to be serving. If the University is going to provide good child care as a benefit to its employees and students, then it should be affordable child care for working parents, not as one more burden on young faculty.

Research

The principle comment concerning research administration is the Oasis system, as reflected in the first comment below.

I hope the problems with Oasis's accuracy in reflecting funds encumbered will be solved soon. Assuming such problems can be solved, Oasis will still not be very useful to PIs until it is accessible at times other than M-F 9-5

Research Foundation Payroll is extremely difficult to work with - and sometimes downright nasty.