

# Wake Forest University College Senior Survey Results 2013

Below is a summary of the 2013 College Senior Survey. Wake Forest University compared favorably to the other 93 administering institutions in nearly every construct area, although there were several differences within WFU by gender. Wake Forest seniors trended positively in the areas of diversity, help from faculty, and professional focus. Yet fewer reported being “very satisfied” with their overall college experience or indicated they would “definitely” choose Wake Forest again (this was especially true among females). Additionally, more seniors expressed dissatisfaction with facilities and the role Greek life has on campus.

The College Senior Survey (CSS) is a national survey directed at UCLA by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI). The CSS is useful for determining from seniors their satisfaction in a number of areas across the university, as well as how they spend their time. The CSS was first administered to Wake Forest seniors graduating in the Class of 2001 and has been administered every other year since then.

The CSS was distributed electronically by the Office of Institutional Research in March 2013 to all Wake Forest seniors scheduled to graduate in May and August, 2013. A total of 356 seniors submitted responses, representing 32% of the Class of 2013. The respondents were mostly representative of the senior class, with slightly more students reporting two or more races and slightly fewer not reporting their race. Women were over represented at 60% of respondents compared to 52% of the senior class.

## **WFU Compares Favorably to Nation on Item Constructs**

Due to the large quantity of individual questions asked and the complexity of assessing specific areas of potential concern, HERI developed a number of constructs which group information gathered from numerous items into a more reliable, cumulative measure. These construct scores, which provide a way of looking at overall trends among survey responses, have a population mean of 50 across all administering institutions and a standard deviation of 10.

Constructs in Which WFU Scored Above National Average (WFU Average Score):

- Habits of Mind (56.8)
- Social Self-Concept (54.2)
- Social Agency (54.1)
- Positive Cross-Racial Interaction (53.7)
- Civic Engagement (53.4)
- Satisfaction with Coursework (53.2)
- Academic Self-Concept (53.2)

Notably, Wake Forest did not score below 49.9 on any construct, nor did WFU construct scores differ markedly from Private University scores. However, within Wake Forest, male students had higher construct scores than female students on Academic Self-Concept (56.2 vs. 51.2); Pluralistic Orientation (54.3 vs. 51.0) and Civic Awareness (54.2 vs. 49.6). WFU respondents in 2013 scored higher than 2011 respondents on Habits of the Mind (56.8 vs. 53.4), but lower on Leadership (52.2 vs. 55.2).

For more information on constructs, see <http://ir.wfu.edu/files/css2013yeartoyear.pdf#page=3>; on participating institutions, see <http://ir.wfu.edu/files/css2013yeartoyear.pdf#page=72> .

## **No Meaningful Change in Overall Satisfaction Construct, Yet...**

Although there was no meaningful change in the Overall Satisfaction construct from 2011 to 2013, fewer students overall reported being “very satisfied” with their overall college experience (38% vs. 48%) and fewer female respondents indicated they would “definitely” choose Wake Forest again (54% vs. 42%). Part of the reason for the changes may be due to the respondents in 2011, when the response rate was just 26% (compared to 32% this year) and females were disproportionately represented. As stated previously, women represented 60% of this year’s respondents but made up 52% of the senior class. In 2011, women constituted 65% of the respondents and 52% of the senior class. Therefore it is less certain that the 2011 responses were representative of the overall experiences and satisfaction of the Class of 2011.

## **Individual Items of Note**

Although less reliable than constructs, several items showed increasing involvement of seniors at Wake in areas of diversity, academic pursuits, and professional growth, while there was a simultaneous increase in dissatisfaction primarily with facilities.

### Items of Positive Movement at Wake

- Had a roommate of different race/ethnicity
- Taken an ethnic studies course
- Participated in study abroad
- Frequently worked with classmates on group projects during class
- Participated in an undergraduate research program
- Professors frequently provide advice and guidance about educational program
- Professors frequently provide help to improve study skills
- Professors frequently provide help in achieving professional goals
- Participation in leadership training
- Participation in internship programs
- Decreased frequent cigarette smoking

### Items of Negative Movement at Wake

- Decreased satisfaction with laboratory facilities and equipment
- Decreased satisfaction with library facilities
- Decreased satisfaction with student housing facilities
- Decreased satisfaction with financial aid package

In general, Wake seniors compared more favorably to seniors at Private Universities on individual items concerning international/ethnic studies, classroom and faculty interaction, as well as social and civic engagement. Seniors at Private Universities reported on a couple of items greater satisfaction involving community and more diverse rooming.

### More Wake Seniors compared to Private University Seniors reported to have:

- Participated in study abroad
- Taken an ethnic studies course
- Been very satisfied with the amount of contact with faculty
- Been very satisfied with class size
- Not fallen asleep in class

- Spent 11 to 15 hours per week attending classes/labs
- Joined a social fraternity or sorority
- Voted in a student election
- Voted in the 2012 fall election

Fewer Wake Seniors compared to Private University Seniors reported to have:

- Been very satisfied with the overall sense of community among students
- Had a roommate of different race/ethnicity
- Frequently smoked cigarette

For more information on items regarding diversity, study abroad, and drug/alcohol use, see <http://ir.wfu.edu/files/css2013yeartoyear.pdf#page=9> .

For longitudinal graphs, see <http://ir.wfu.edu/files/css2013yeartoyear.pdf#page=35> .

For significant differences in all individual question responses from 2011, see <http://ir.wfu.edu/files/css2013yeartoyear.pdf#page=11> .

For significant differences in all individual question responses from Priv. Univ., see <http://ir.wfu.edu/files/css2013yeartoyear.pdf#page=20> .

For more information on items by gender and comparison group from 2013, see <http://ir.wfu.edu/files/css2013.pdf> .

## **WFU Custom Questions**

In addition to HERI items, WFU has added a number of custom items to the survey over the years. Trends from these items included:

- Rising
  - Financial consideration being a major factor in not participating in an international experience
  - Viewing fraternities and sororities as having a negative impact on social life
- Falling
  - Conflict with major or pre-professional course requirements being a major factor in not participating in an international experience

For all graphs of WFU specific questions see <http://ir.wfu.edu/files/css2013yeartoyear.pdf#page=53> .