Assessment Report
for
Residence Life
(Unit or Program Name)

Academic Year 2011-2012
(Assessment Period Covered)
June 25, 2013
(Date Submitted)

Expected Outcome:
Through completing the ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Assessment (EBI) the Department of Residence Life expects to gain insight into whether residents are satisfied with the overall on-campus living experience.

Brief Description of Expected Outcome:
The EBI is designed to collect information to better understand the perceptions of our residents in regard to their on-campus living experience. This survey measures residents' overall satisfaction, their satisfaction with hall staff and programming, how safe and secure they feel in their residence halls, their sense of belonging to their hall community, and to what degree residents experience a living environment that is tolerant and respectful.

Assessment Method, Brief Description:
Data was collected using the ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Assessment (EBI). Quantitative analysis and benchmarking were the methods of analysis.

Assessment Method, Full Description:
The EBI assessment includes three types of questions: categorical questions, scaled questions, and open-ended questions. Categorical questions include demographic information such as gender, race, cumulative GPA, and place of residence. Scaled questions rely on a 1-to-7 Likert scale with “1” indicating either strong disagreement or being very dissatisfied and “7” indicating either strong agreement or being very satisfied. Overall, 19 groupings of related scaled questions were analyzed. EBI labels these groupings of questions factors. The factors included hall student staff, hall programming, facilities, safety and security, dining and sense of community.

Responses were scored based on performance percentages 0-100%, with scores between 0-70% being rated as “Issue”, scores between 71-74% being rated as “Needs Work”, and scores between 75-100% being rated as “Good”. Auburn’s results were then benchmarked to a pre-selected group of six institutions, to high research universities (according to Carnegie Classification), and to all participating institutions. Auburn’s select 6 institutions were The University of Alabama, Clemson University,
Assessment Method, Findings:

During the spring 2012 semester the Office of Residence Life conducted the ACUHO-I/EBI Resident Assessment (EBI) for the first time in six years. This assessment is an online survey aimed to collect information about the perceptions of Auburn’s 3,888 on-campus residents. The 2011-2012 EBI survey garnered 1,737 (44.7% of all residents) responses. In line with Auburn’s residential population, more females completed the survey than males, 68% to 31.7% respectively. Of those respondents that reported their race/ethnicity, 81.4% reported considering themselves white. As would be expected due to the composition of on-campus housing, the majority of respondents were freshman (59.3%).

Auburn University scored a 66.7% based on overall satisfaction with the on-campus experience. This is a 6% increase from the last time the EBI survey was completed in 2006. According to the EBI Survey results, the two factors that were identified as strength areas were Safety and Security and Hall/Apt Student Staff. Auburn University Residence Life scored an 84.5% on overall Safety and Security and a 79% for Hall Student Staff. Auburn’s safety and security score is higher than the select six institutions used for comparison and is higher than all institutions surveyed. This score is based on four questions from the EBI survey, including the security of residents’ possessions in their room, how safe residents feel in their room, how safe residents feel in the hall building, and how safe residents feel walking on campus at night. The score for Hall Student Staff, while considered a “Good” score by EBI, is lower than the select six institutions used for comparison. This factor consists of eleven questions, including but not limited to residents’ satisfaction with their staff members’ availability, effort to get to know them, enforcement of policies, and promotion of tolerance of others. Of the eleven questions asked, students scored their hall staff highest on “respecting ethnic diversity” with a score of 84.5% and scored hall staff lowest on “gaining your respect” with a score of 74.3%.

Two factors that contributed to the overall satisfaction score that were identified as areas of improvement were Dining Services with a score of 57.3% and Services Provided, such as roommate agreements, with a score of 60.8%. Since these are two factors that Residence Life does not have supervision of or decision-making power within, the department wanted to focus on factors that do fall within the Residence Life scope, so the next lowest scores are within Room/Floor Environment and Hall Programming. The Room/Floor Environment factor consists of four questions that ask residents’ satisfaction with their ability to study in their room, their ability to sleep without interruption, their degree of privacy, and the noise level of their floor/community. Residence Life scored a 67.8% on this factor. The Hall Programming factor also consisted of four questions. These questions asked about residents’ satisfaction with social/education/cultural programs, with athletic/recreational programs, with the variety of programs offered, and with the quality of programs offered. This factor received a score of 69.5%.
The EBI Student Satisfaction Survey asks questions regarding what EBI terms residents’ overall learning within their on-campus experience. These questions are related to residents’ sense of community, the extent to which they feel their fellow residents are tolerant and respectful, the degree to which living on-campus has impacted their personal growth, and the degree to which living on-campus has helped them to improve their time management skills, study skills and problem-solving skills. All of these factors are used in the calculation of the overall learning score.

Auburn University scored a 67.2% for the overall learning category. This is a decrease from 78% in the 2006 survey. The two factors that were identified as areas of strength were Fellow Residents are Tolerant with a score of 76.7% and Sense of Community with a score of 75.5%. The Fellow Residents are Tolerant factor asks five questions about the extent to which residents feel that their fellow residents are respectful of people of differing races/ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, religious beliefs, and political views. Residents scored respect of differing genders highest with a score of 83.3% and respect of differing sexual orientations lowest with a score of 70.2%. The Sense of Community factor consists of three questions asking the degree to which residents trust other students (70.5%), respect other students (82.5%), and feel accepted by other students in their living area (74.3%).

The two factors that contributed to the overall learning score that were identified as areas of improvement were Personal Growth with a score of 61% and Manage Time, Study, Solve Problems with a score of 58.3%. The four questions that contributed to the Personal Growth factor related to the extent to which residents felt that living on-campus had enhanced their ability: to understand the consequences of alcohol use and abuse (57%), to understand the consequences of drug use and abuse (55%), to respect other races/ethnicities (64.7%), and to improve communication skills (65.2%). Residents also scored the extent to which living on-campus had enhanced their ability to: study more effectively (51.2%), to manage their time effectively (55.8%), and to solve their own problems (68%).

**Use of Findings for Improvement:**

The Office of Residence Life conducted the 2011-2012 EBI late in the academic year when residents are not as likely to rate their on-campus experience highly. At the end of the academic year, residents are likely stressed over academics, are tired of their roommate/suitmates, are sick of eating in the dining halls, and are ready to go home for summer. Little annoyances that did not bother them a couple months earlier are now frustrating to them. This should have been taken into account when the assessment was planned, and the assessment should have been done during the first semester of the academic year. As such, the Office of Residence Life will be conducting the 2012-2013 EBI in late October 2012 and plans to re-conduct the EBI each year around the same time. This yearly assessment will allow Residence Life to see trends in student opinions and determine areas of strength and areas of growth as the department moves forward.

At this point, Residence Life only has one year of current data on which to base recommendations. Due to the timing of the survey, these findings may not show the complete picture. With this in mind, major changes based on the findings of the 2011 EBI Survey have not been implemented; however, there are several ways in which the findings have influenced small changes. Even more so, the findings have caused the Office of Residence Life to start conversations internally and with other departments about ways in which our residents’ on-campus experience can be improved.
One change that has occurred is in the Residence Life programming model. In 2012, during the month of September (the first full month of the academic year) every residence hall was required to host a hall program related to Academic Success. These programs included topics such as time management, study tips, academic resources on-campus, and study sessions. Each staff member will also be required to complete a bulletin board on their floor related to Academic Success during in January 2013. Residence Life has placed a continued emphasis on hall staff members’ interactions with residents. RAs and HDs are each required to provide one program per week for the first six weeks of the fall 2012 semester.

As stated, the main result of these findings is the conversations that have started surrounding the areas of growth that were identified. These findings have been shared with several other departments on campus including the Department of University Housing and Dining Services. Specifically, the Office of Residence Life has recommended that University Housing assess the room assignments process and the room change process. EBI ranks the room assignment process and the room change process as the number one predictor that would make a difference to residents’ overall satisfaction, so improving this process should be considered. The Department of University Housing is beginning the renovation process in the Hill residence halls. This area is the residential area that scored the lowest on satisfaction for facilities and for room/floor environment. The renovations are expected to improve scores for both of these factors.

Additionally, even though safety and security scored very well on the EBI survey, Residence Life continues to focus on ways in which we can keep our residents safe. Conversations have started about limiting the access points to the residence halls to a single entrance point for each building. Residence Life has begun a campaign that will be launched in each residence hall to bring awareness to simple things residents can do to protect themselves and others, such as always locking their doors and never letting someone into the building that they do not personally know. Residence Life will continue to seek out ways to improve even in the areas that scored well.