

ACT Non-Returning Student Survey, 2004

Purpose: To identify why students leave school and to determine satisfaction levels with various college services and characteristics.¹

1. The data collected addresses information relating to what university group or situation?

Previously enrolled students. Data deal with the population of students withdrawing and not returning to UND and the reasons why they are withdrawing/non-returning.

2. How often is this tool used and analyzed? What time of year?

2004 Report based upon enrolled students of fall semester 2003, but who did not return during spring or fall semesters 2004. There were 94 respondents out of 664 delivered surveys for a response rate of 14.2%.

2003 Report based upon enrolled students of fall semester 2002, but who did not return during spring or fall semesters 2003. There were 92 respondents out of 904 delivered surveys for a response rate of 10.2%.

(To be delivered every 3 years after 2003.¹)

3. To whom does the assessment group believe that an analysis of this report would be beneficial? In other words, what individuals, departments, or programs need this information in order to have reliable information to 'close the loop' on their assessment process?

'Academic and Support Services'¹

Based upon respondents' top 5 reasons for leaving: Student Services, Outreach Services, Enrollment Services, University Relations, Advisement Personnel, Financial Aid Personnel, Learning Services Personnel, Counseling Center

4. Who is responsible to provide the assessment group the information for this report?

Office of Institutional Research (OIR). (Carmen Williams and Jean Chen, 2004)

5. What UND student learning goals are being assessed?

This survey is not intended to address specific learning goals.

6. What evidence is provided or should be provided to support the group's findings?

N/A. The survey is not intended to address student learning.

7. What evidence does the assessment group believe should be collected/compiled for the focused visit or the next accreditation visit?

The opportunity to generate 20 'local' questions could be utilized if UND stakeholders (Academic and Support Services) determined a need.

Perhaps an additional response option of 'Deployment' could be added to 'Personal Reasons for Leaving this College.' (Deployment was stated as a factor in the return rate.)

Perhaps encouragement to provide explanations could be given. One third of students who left UND were 'Disappointed with the quality of instruction offered by this college.' Clarification would be helpful: is it poor instruction or student expectations (appropriate or inappropriate) that were not met?

In the analysis, perhaps the responses of the minority students could be isolated. The data from these students, although the 'n' is small, may reveal areas that need to be improved by UND.

The sample size is so small that the data derived from the study may not directly affect accreditation. However, in Appendix 5, Institutional Reason Rank #1, 30 of 94 respondents (32.9%) claimed inadequate advising as a reason for dropping out. Appendix 5, Academic Reason Rank #1, 29 of 94 respondents (31%) claimed disappointment in the quality of instruction as a reason for leaving UND. These might be areas the institution needs to consider in the immediate future.

8. Is this tool a direct measure, an indirect measure, or a non-measure of student learning?

A non-measure of student learning. See #6 above.

9. Does this tool empower individuals or the university to better understand and assess student learning at the university? If so, how?

The survey only provides information as to why students stop learning at UND.

10. Is there a better way to obtain or report the data to be analyzed?

OIR makes decisions regarding delivery of the NDUS surveys—snail mail or web-based. Maximizing the response rate is considered.

Interviews could add depth and clarity to the reasons for leaving, and would be helpful in understanding choices such as 'Disappointed with the quality of instruction at this college' and 'Academic advising was inadequate.' However, interviews are very costly in terms of time, personnel, and analysis.

Both the executive summary and full report compiled and written by Jean Chen and Carmen Williams (OIR) are clearly -written and easy to understand.

11. At what level of assessment is the tool being used; beginning level, making progress level, or maturing stage of continuous improvement? Is there any evidence to support the assessment group's deduction?

While data gathered is useful to several groups on campus, the data is not related to student learning goals. See #6 above. This question is not pertinent to this survey.

12. Does the tool reflect a culture of assessment at UND?

Yes, in that UND is interested in student experiences and in improving campus quality of life.

13. Does the tool need increased university or administrative support or faculty involvement in order to make it more useable or effective?

This question could best be answered by 'Academic and Support Services', and other parties who would use the survey results.

14. Does the assessment group need any administrative insight or guidance in order to analyze the tool effectively?

See #15 below.

15. What value does the group place on this tool for helping to achieve the university's assessment plan?

This tool does not address student learning. Administrative personnel may use the results to better understand why students leave UND; changes in unit policies or procedures or initiation of intervention strategies may result.

16. What are the assessment findings of this tool?

*This survey provides the five major reasons for students leaving and not returning to UND. The five top reasons for males leaving UND are 1) decided to attend a different college, 2) wanted to move (was transferred) to a new location, 3) disappointed with the quality of instruction at this college***, 4) dissatisfied with college social life, and 5) academic advising was inadequate***. For females, reasons 1 & 2 are the same as for males; other reasons are 3) wanted to live nearer to parents or loved ones, 4) academic advising was inadequate***, and 5) dissatisfied with my grades. The reasons marked by *** are significant and need to be addressed by the institution, associated colleges and departments.*

It would be revealing to determine the specific reasons for minorities leaving UND. Such information may expose difficulties inherent at UND which confront these students during their academic pursuits.

17. Are there any findings which may be of potential interest to other parties on campus? Who should be encouraged to access these findings?

See #3 and #16 above.

18. Review Summary

The ACT Non-Returning Student Survey does not address student learning goals as outlined by the Mission Statement or General Education Committee.

Reasons for leaving UND (dropping out --leaving UND, or stopping out – returning to UND at a later time) include personal, institutional, academic financial, and employment reasons. Reasons vary by gender and class level.

Additional analyses could be run on sub-sets of data.

19. Recommendations of the Reviewers

Results should be disseminated to parties identified in #3 above. If these stakeholders find meaning in the results, as per their report to the Assessment Committee, it would seem the survey could be distributed once every 3 years.

Regardless, it is mandated by the NDUS. It would be helpful to know how the NDUS uses the data.

20. *(As the summary and note-worthy items are relayed to other stakeholders, what meaning do they find in the survey results? How do they use the results in decision making (examples are helpful); how is the information used to 'close the loop?')*

21. *(Reports from the stakeholder(s) re this Assessment Tool is (are) due: _____)*

22. *(The Assessment Committee's final summary as to the usefulness of the Assessment Tool, university-wide.)*

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Citations

1. Institutional Assessment Plan, 2002