

2004-2005 Residence Life Perception Study

Executive Summary

In an effort to continually evaluate student satisfaction with their residence hall living experience, the Office of Residence Life conducts an annual perception study. The study is administered in November of the fall semester. This particular survey addressed facilities, grounds, safety, housekeeping, maintenance, student staff, hall programming, hall policies, and the First Year Involvement program. This year 3,849 useable surveys were collected (72% of the residence hall population). The following summary represents the highlights of the study. A favorable rating indicates student responses of “strongly agree” or “agree” in terms of their satisfaction with particular services, programs, or amenities.

Overall Satisfaction

Regarding satisfaction with their overall on-campus living experience, 94% of students reported a favorable response which is equal to the highest rating (1998, 2002, 2003) we have achieved in the thirteen years of administering this survey.

Maintenance and Bulding Condition

Students' perception regarding the timeliness of maintenance repairs in the residence halls remained constant this year at 87%.

Students' satisfaction with the quality of maintenance work done in their buildings declined only slightly from 90% last year to 89% this year.

When asked about their satisfaction with the overall condition/repair of their residence halls, 90% of students responded favorably.

When asked to compare the overall condition of their residence hall with those at other universities they have seen, 85% of students indicated that their hall is about the same or better.

Housekeeping

93% of the students indicated that the housekeeping staff cleans their building to their satisfaction.

97% of students reported that the housekeeping staff is courteous when providing services in the residence halls.

Students reported slight increase in satisfaction with the cleanliness of public areas in their halls on weekends - 75% in fall 2004 compared to 73% a year before. This is the highest rating we have had for this question in the thirteen years of administering this survey.

Residence Hall Atmosphere

When asked if they believed the residence halls to be conducive to study, 74% of students answered favorably (down slightly from 75% last year).

When asked if they believed the residence halls to be conducive to sleep, 76% answered favorably (also down slightly from 78% the year before).

Acceptance of Diversity

Students' perception of the climate of acceptance in their hall regarding issues of diversity has decreased very slightly from 93% to 92% this year.

83% of students reported that their own *acceptance* of persons different from themselves has increased since coming to JMU. This is up from 81% the last three years.

In a related question, we asked– “Since coming to JMU, my *awareness* of persons different from myself has increased.” 75% answered favorably to this question, down one percentage point from the year before.

Safety and Security

95% of students indicated that they feel safe in their residence hall, down very slightly from 96% last year.

A higher number of students indicated that they lock their bedroom door at night – 55% compared to 50% a year ago.

Similarly, 68% of students indicated that they keep their bedroom door locked when no one is at home, up from 64% in 2003.

A lower number of students reported that they allow people into their residence hall even if they don't know them – 51% compared to 56% a year ago.

Residence hall programs and activities

86% of students reported that they believe programs offered in the residence halls assist new students in their transition to JMU, up slightly from 85% in fall 2003.

Students' perception of the impact of residence hall activities on their learning experience was represented by a favorable response rate of 81%, the fourth straight year this figure has increased by a percentage point.

79% of students reported that money is well spent by ORL in offering activities to students.

61% of students reported that they have attended between one and three programs or activities in their hall this year, the same as last year.

45% of students reported attending a program or activity in their residence hall that involved a faculty member. Given that this data was collected only two and a half months after the academic year began, this number is very satisfactory.

35% of students reported attending a program or activity that addressed individual differences or diversity. This is a very slight decrease from 36% in 2003.

Roommates

89% of students indicated that they were either very compatible or somewhat compatible with their roommate. 50% of students indicated that they were assigned together by the Office of Residence Life (as opposed to choosing to live together themselves or having a single room.)

86% of respondents indicated that they had completed the roommate agreement our office provides and 64% indicated that it helped them get along with their roommate (up from 58% last year).

Future plans

This year, 44% of students reported that they plan to live on campus next year, up from 42% the last two years.

Primary reasons for choosing where to live next year

Students were asked to respond to the following question: "If I were to *move off campus*, the primary reason would be:"

- a. Lack of privacy
2002 = 53%
2003 = 53%
2004 = 53%
- b. Condition of residence hall facilities
2002 = 16%
2003 = 15%
2004 = 14%
- c. Noise that interferes with studying or sleeping
2002 = 12%
2003 = 13%
2004 = 14%
- d. Cost of living on campus
2002 = 17%
2003 = 17%
2004 = 16%
- e. Restrictions on smoking in residence halls (asked for the first time last year)
2001 = 3%
2002 = 2%
2003 = 2%
2004 = 2%

Students were also asked - "If I were to *stay on campus*, the primary reason would be:"

- a. Convenient access to dining, housekeeping, and other living necessities
2002 = 29%
2003 = 30%
2004 = 29%
- b. Convenient access to classes, faculty, campus resources and activities.
2002 = 52%
2003 = 51%
2004 = 52%
- c. Cost of housing
2002 = 4%
2003 = 5%
2004 = 5%
- d. My friends are staying on campus
2002 = 6%
2003 = 6%
2004 = 6%
- e. My parents are requiring me to live on campus
2002 = 10%
2003 = 9%
2004 = 9%