DALTON STATE COLLEGE
OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH & PLANNING
**USER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS**

Introduction

The Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP) at Dalton State College provides the support for institutional decision-making by providing analysis and dissemination of data on faculty and staff, students, student achievement, and other subjects. The Office actively participates in the Strategic Planning process, and provides other reports on an *ad hoc* basis. The office also provides guidance and coordination for assessment activities undertaken at the College, and reports on results to appropriate constituencies. The Director serves as a liaison between the College and the Office of Planning and Policy Analysis for the University System and prepares reports for the University System and external agencies (e.g., IPEDS, College Board). To evaluate the effectiveness of the functions of the office as well as poll for suggestions on how to improve its services, a user satisfaction survey was administered to administrators, faculty, and staff in the Spring of 2001. Surveys were sent to approximately 200 full-time faculty and staff.

Description of Users

The OIRP received a total of 55 survey responses.   Of the respondents, slightly more than 60 percent had contacted the office for assistance or information in the last year. Figure 1 shows who frequently used the services of OIRP.
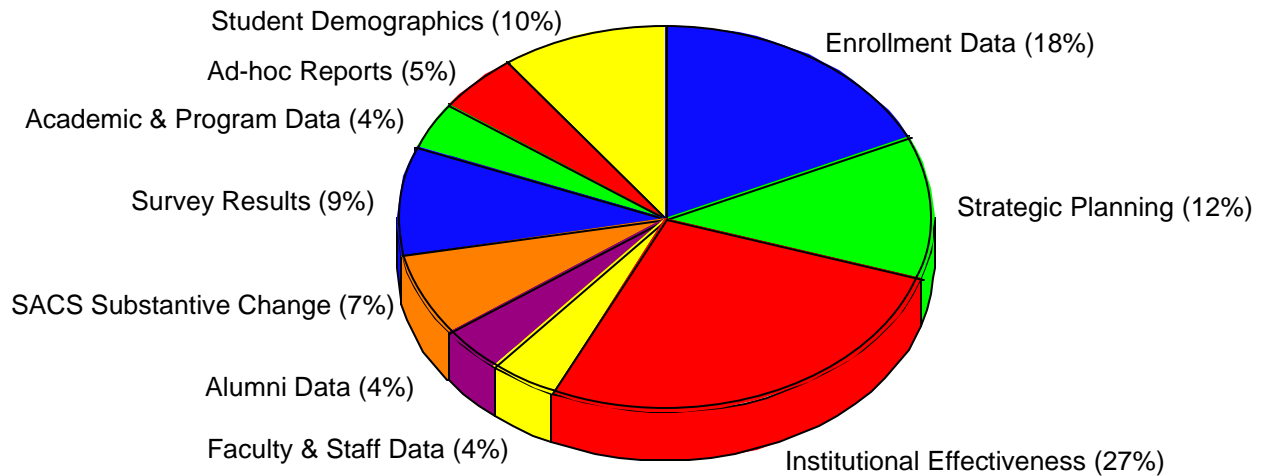
Figure 1 Users of OIRP Services

Staff (18%)

Administration (18%)

Faculty (64%)
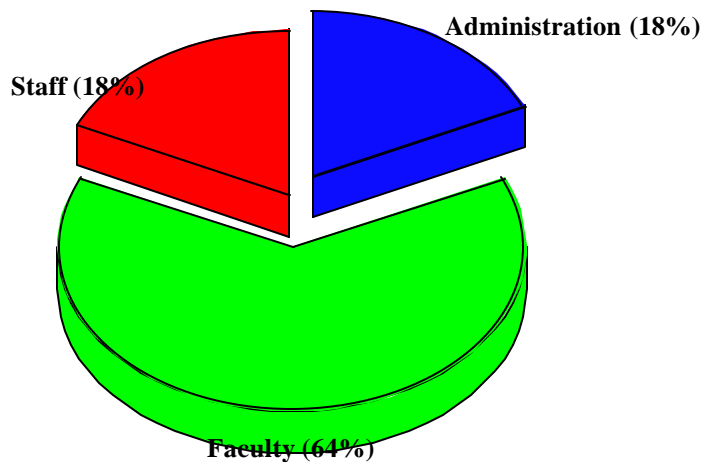
Types of Data Requests

Mainly, the nature of assistance was mostly data requests on various topics (e.g., student enrollments, institutional effectiveness, survey results, etc.). There were also requests for technical assistance with the new software for College strategic planning (PlanBuilder) and other ad-hoc projects. Figure 2 provides a breakdown of the types of data requests.
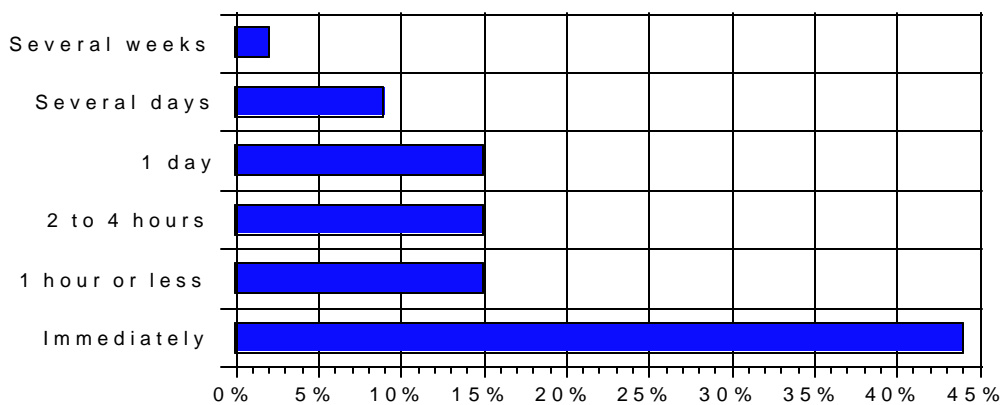
Figure 2 Types of Data Requests

Student Demographics (10%)
Ad-hoc Reports (5%)
Academic & Program Data (4%)
Survey Results (9%)
SACS Substantive Change (7%)
Alumni Data (4%)
Faculty & Staff Data (4%)
Enrollment Data (18%)
Strategic Planning (12%)
Institutional Effectiveness (27%)

### *Satisfaction with Time to Respond to Data Requests*

Users who requested information indicated the amount of time it took for OIRP to complete their data requests ranged from "Immediately" to "Several Weeks." Figure 3 displays users' responses with respect to how long it took for OIRP to complete their information requests.

Figure 3 Time to Complete Data Requests

Response	Percentage
Several weeks	~2%
Several days	~9%
1 day	~15%
2 to 4 hours	~15%
1 hour or less	~15%
Immediately	~44%

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40% 45%

Users were also asked whether the time required to complete their requests met their needs or expectations. Almost 60% of users said their request met their required deadline and about a third indicated their requests were completed more quickly than they required. A small number indicated that their requests took longer to complete than required or had no specific time requirements (Figure 3).
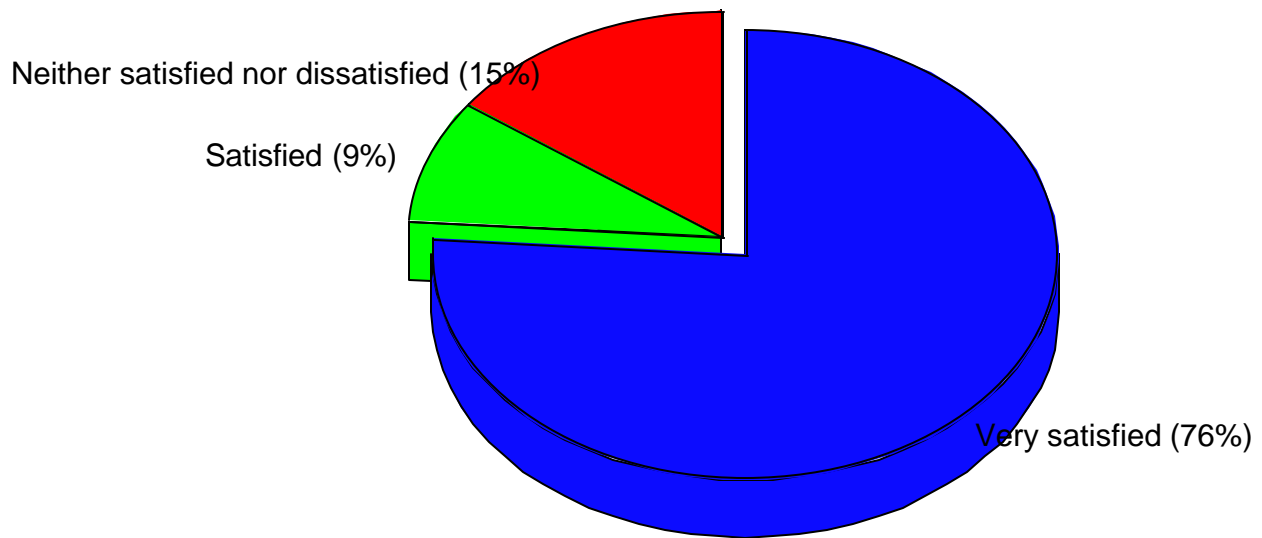
Figure 3 Users Time Expectations
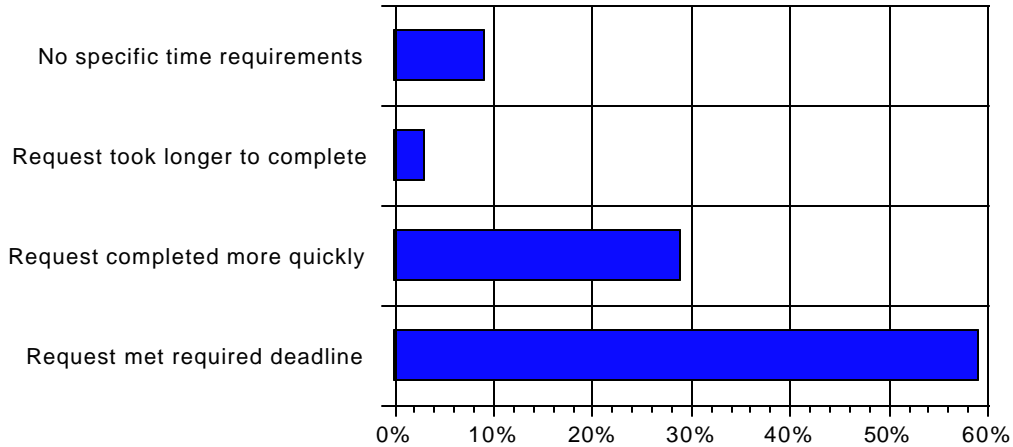
Satisfaction with Information Received

Most users (76%) indicated they were very satisfied with the information they received from OIRP. Nine percent were satisfied and 15% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (Figure 4).

Figure 4 Satisfaction with Information Received

Satisfaction with Level of Service Received

In addition to their satisfaction with information received, users also responded to a question on how satisfied they were with the *level* of service they received. Again, a majority (85%) indicated they were very satisfied or satisfied with the level of service. A few (6%) were dissatisfied with the level of service received (Figure 5).

Figure 5   Satisfaction with Level of Service Received

Dissatisfied (6%)

Neutral (9%)

Satisfied (3%)

Very satisfied (82%)
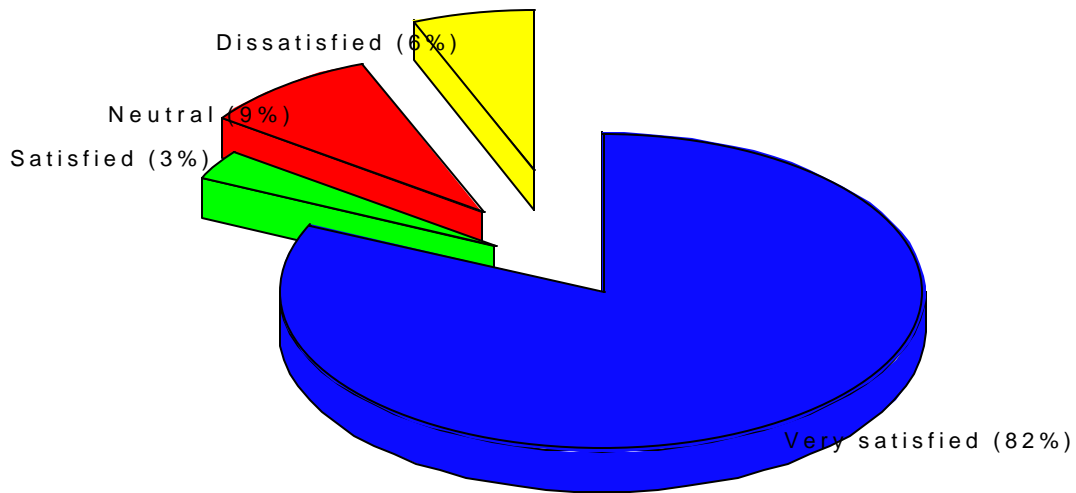
Frequency of OIRP Documents Used

The Office of Institutional Research produces a number of documents and maintains a web page to house these documents. Users were asked how often they use each of these documents. A summary of their responses is presented below.

	Use Frequently	Use Often	Use Occasionally	Never Use
Quick Facts	5%	15%	67%	13%
Info Digest	0%	22%	64%	14%
Ten-Year Quick Statistical Overview	0%	18%	46%	36%
Faculty Data	10%	27%	36%	27%
Graduating Student Survey Results Report	8%	22%	55%	15%
Alumni Survey Results Report	4%	15%	55%	26%
Employer Survey Results Report	10%	18%	36%	36%
Faculty Survey Results Report	9%	14%	55%	22%
Staff Survey Results Report	4%	15%	55%	22%

Frequency of OIRP Documents Used (Cont'd)

	Use Frequently	*Use Often*	*Use Occasionally*	*Never Use*
Strategic Plan	10%	28%	46%	16%
Strategic Plan Progress Report	9%	9%	42%	40%
Institutional Research office Web page	16%	2%	55%	27%

Usefulness of OIRP Documents

Users also responded to how useful the documents produced by OIRP have been to them. The Table below summarizes their responses.

	Always Useful	*Often Useful*	*Occasionally Useful*	*Never Useful*
Quick Facts	29%	25%	42%	4%
Info Digest	36%	24%	36%	4%
Ten-Year Quick Statistical Overview	29%	27%	36%	7%
Faculty Data	33%	27%	36%	4%
Graduating Student Survey Results Report	36%	22%	33%	9%
Alumni Survey Results Report	33%	22%	36%	9%
Employer Survey Results Report	36%	18%	36%	10%
Faculty Survey Results Report	36%	20%	36%	8%
Staff Survey Results Report	38%	18%	35%	9%
Strategic Plan	36%	36%	24%	4%
Strategic Plan Progress Report	36%	27%	30%	7%
Institutional Research office Web page	45%	20%	30%	5%

The survey afforded an opportunity for users to suggest how improvements could be made to the documents in order to make them more useful. Unanimously, those who responded said the documents produced and maintained were fine and that no changes were needed. A few said OIRP need to find a way to let the College community be informed about the availability of these documents. It was remarked that some people still call OIRP for data – only to be told that the data is available at the office's website. Furthermore, it was suggested that updates and current data (e.g., *Quick Facts*) should be posted in a timely fashion. Occasionally, the most current data is not available at the website.

Primary Role and Responsibilities of OIRP

A question asked users what they felt should be the primary role of the Institutional Planning and Research office. Again, most were generous with their remarks about the good work performed by the office, particularly the collection and analysis of data about students, alumni, faculty and staff. All the same, it was emphasized that the primary role of the office should be to collect and analyze data to support the mission and purpose of the College. This role should also include assistance with strategic planning, academic program assessment, and making sure the College always meets the SACS criteria for accreditation. Other primary roles suggested were advising President and constituents on the most effective and meaningful ways to collect and process data for institutional effectiveness and decision-making. It was feared that currently, OIRP seems to be a "data gathering" rather than a "planning and decision-making" entity.

Two follow-up questions asked respondents to indicate what kinds of data or information they currently use to help them do their jobs or make decisions. As well, what additional data would they like to have? Figures 6 and 7 display their responses.
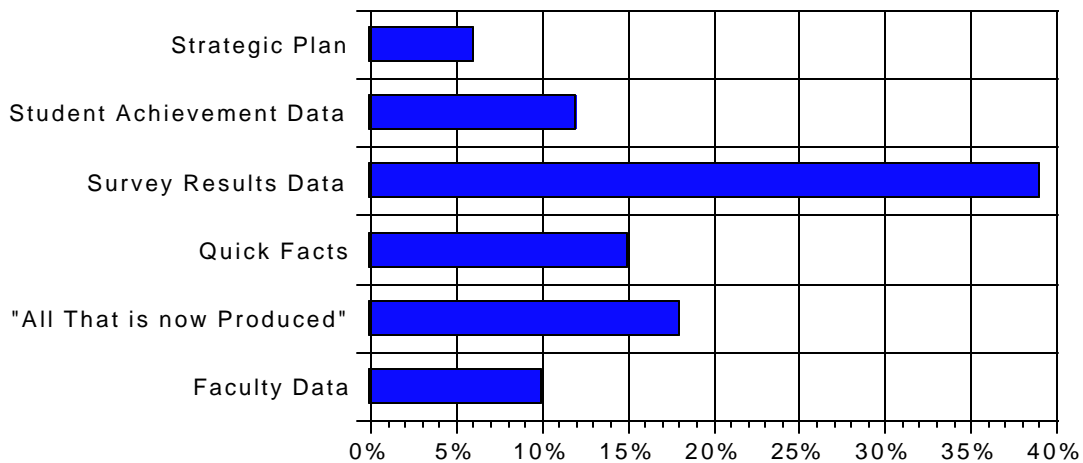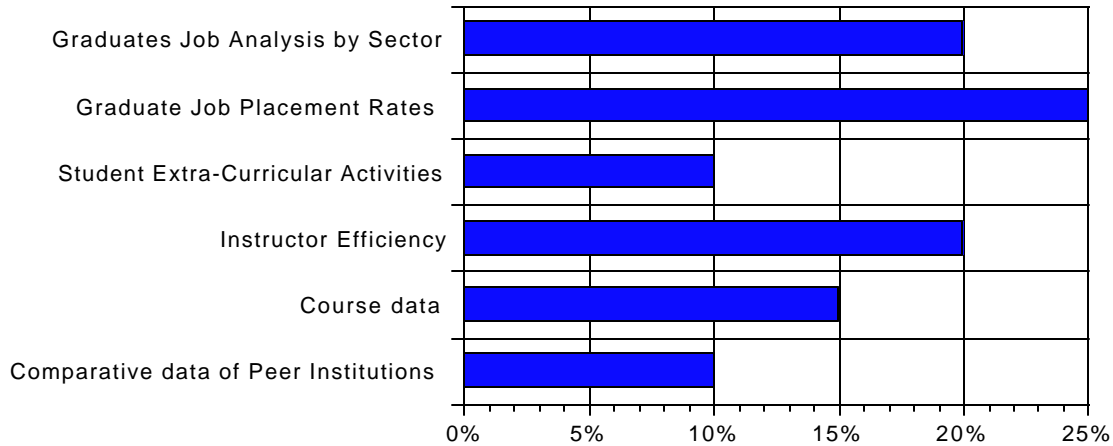
Figure 6 Data Currently Used

Figure 7   Useful Additional Data

Function and Effectiveness of OIRP

The survey canvassed general opinions of users about the function and effectiveness of the Institutional Research office. Respondents were asked to state their agreement or disagreement with general statements about the work of OIRP. A summary of the responses appears below.

	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Don't Know/ No Opinion*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*
The Office of Institutional Research at DSC is effective in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information and data.	65%	28%	7%	0%	0%
The Institutional Research office provides assistance in identifying type/availability of planning and assessment data.	55%	33%	10%	2%	0%
The institutional research function communicates relevant institutional data to the college community in a timely fashion.	64%	32%	4%	0%	0%
The institutional research function fulfills the research, planning and assessment needs of DSC.	62%	27%	11%	0%	0%
The quality material provided by the Institutional Research office is interesting and informative.	51%	45%	4%	0%	0%
The office's Newsletter, *The InfoDigest,* is a good source of information.	56%	38%	6%	0%	0%
In general, I am satisfied with the work performed by the Institutional Research office.	69%	29%	2%	0%	0%

Comments and Suggestions to Improve the College's Institutional Research Services

Finally, users were asked to comment on the various aspects of the survey and particularly to suggest ways of improving the services provided by OIRP. These include:

- Office needs a full time secretary or administrative assistant. There is obviously an enormous amount of work that needs to be done in the office and seems that additional support is needed if the Director is to continue to stay on top of his responsibilities.

- There needs to be a way to streamline the College's assessment procedures with respect to student learning outcomes. The classroom assessment procedure that calls for annual outcomes assessment is too cumbersome and repetitious. This is really unacceptable. The assessment forms need to be significantly reduced and a computer template or a simplified form need to be generated to cut down on the time required to complete these forms. It will also serve the College well if there is one central location on the campus computer system where faculty can enter assessment information and reports are automatically generated. This will be useful and economical to all parties.

- The administration needs to inform the College community in some way how all the data that is generated by the Institutional Research office is used to make policy decisions or to make improvements in programs and services. It seems that there should be more of a purpose than just gathering facts. There is no awareness of what happens once the facts are gathered. Perhaps the office needs to keep record and disseminate information to the College community about how the data and analysis it generates are used to make decisions.

- There is not enough information about the clubs and organizations on campus. Considering the diversity of DSC students, it would be interesting to know the number, ages and majors of participants in each organization. In this regard, there should be more questions on student and graduate surveys concerning student activities, clubs, trips, and activity period.