

## Ruffalo Noel Levitz 2015-16 Interpretive Guide

### The Priorities Survey for Online Learners Interpretive Guide

The Priorities Survey for Online Learners (PSOL) is appropriate for students in online distance learning programs. The PSOL is similar in structure and design to the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) but the items have been modified and crafted to be appropriate for online learners.

The PSOL gives the institution an opportunity to examine the priorities of their online learning students as a unique group. The data help you to identify what matters to your online learners and how satisfied these students are. With this information, institutions can target areas most in need of improvement in order to retain these students.

The Priorities Survey for Online Learners asks students to respond with a level of importance and a level of satisfaction. A performance gap is calculated by subtracting the satisfaction score from the importance score.

### Versions of the PSOL

There is only one version of the Priorities Survey for Online Learners. It is appropriate for administration to students who are completing online programs as their primary interaction with an institution, or as a supplement to on-campus courses. The norm group includes online learning students who have completed the PSOL.

### Item Structure on the PSOL

- There are 26 standard items rated for importance and satisfaction on the PSOL.
- The PSOL includes ten items which may be defined by the institution and rated for importance and satisfaction.
- The survey includes seven items that assess sources of information for the student. These items only ask for an importance rating and do not include satisfaction or performance gap scores.
- The survey includes 11 items that assess pre-enrollment factors. These items only ask for an importance rating and do not include satisfaction or performance gap scores.

### Three Summary Items are Included the Survey

So far, how has your online experience met your expectations?

- 1 - Much worse than I expected
- 2 - Quite a bit worse than I expected
- 3 - Worse than I expected
- 4 - About what I expected
- 5 - Better than I expected
- 6 - Quite a bit better than I expected
- 7 - Much better than I expected

Rate your overall satisfaction with your online experience here thus far.

- 1 - Not satisfied at all
- 2 - Not very satisfied
- 3 - Somewhat dissatisfied
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Somewhat satisfied
- 6 - Satisfied
- 7 - Very satisfied

If you had it to do over, would you enroll in this program again?

- 1 - Definitely not
- 2 - Probably not
- 3 - Maybe not
- 4 - I don't know
- 5 - Maybe yes
- 6 - Probably yes
- 7 - Definitely yes

### There are 13 Standard Demographic Items on the PSOL.

The PSOL includes two optional demographic item with up to six responses (students may only select one response). Consult your survey administrator for details on the items requested by your institution.

The survey also includes an optional demographic item to capture the students' major or program with a four-digit numeric code. Again, consult your survey administrator for details on the corresponding major or programs.

### The Scales

The items on the PSOL have been analyzed statistically and conceptually to form comprehensive scales. A description of the scales follows.

#### PSOL: 5 scales

- Institutional Perceptions
- Academic Services
- Instructional Services
- Enrollment Services
- Student Services

### Description of Scales

**Institutional Perceptions:** assesses how students perceive your institution.

**Academic Services:** assesses the services students utilize to achieve their academic goals. These services include advising, course offerings, technical assistance, online library resources, and tutoring services.

**Instructional Services:** measures students' academic experience, the instructional materials, the faculty/student interactions, evaluation procedures, and the quality of the instruction.

**Enrollment Services:** assesses the processes and services related to enrolling students in the online program, including financial aid, registration, and payment procedures.

**Student Services:** measures the quality of student programs and services, including responses to student requests, online career services, and the bookstore.

The items which contribute to each scale can be reviewed within your campus report. The HTML electronic report includes the items within the scales on the scale report; when you select the scale name it will expand to show the items. In the paper report, there is a section which provides the scales alphabetically and the list of items within the scale.

### Reliability and Validity

The PSOL was derived from the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory™, which has shown significant reliability and validity over time. In statistically valid terms, student satisfaction can be associated readily with numerous measures of institution success, including retention, graduation rates, and loan default rates. In a pilot study using 1,315 students, the scales for the PSOL show acceptable reliability, with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.77.

A prior study on the validity of the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) demonstrated convergent validity by correlating satisfaction scores from the SSI with satisfaction scores from the College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSSQ), another statistically reliable satisfaction instrument. The Pearson correlation between these two instruments ( $r=.71$ ;  $p<.00001$ ) is high enough to indicate that the SSI's satisfaction scores measure the same satisfaction construct as the CSSQ's scores, and yet the correlation is low enough to indicate that there are distinct differences between the two instruments.

Like its sibling inventories, the PSOL demonstrates significant statistical reliability.

### The Inventory Development

The Priorities Survey for Online Learners was modeled on the Student Satisfaction Inventory. The text of the items was modified and crafted by Ruffalo Noel Levitz to be appropriate for distance learning student responses.

The PSOL was available beginning in 2001. As of 2015, it has been administered by more than 240 institutions and completed by over 350,000 students.

### Interpreting Your Results

For guidance on interpreting your results, please refer to the General Interpretive Guide or contact Ruffalo Noel Levitz for additional assistance.

A word about Ruffalo Noel Levitz

A trusted partner to higher education, Ruffalo Noel Levitz helps systems and campuses reach and exceed their goals for enrollment, marketing, and student success.

To help with goal attainment, our 50 full-time consultants and 60 part-time associates bring direct experience from their previous and current positions on campuses as consultants, enrollment managers,

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marketing leaders, retention directors, institutional researchers, financial aid directors, faculty, student affairs leaders, advising directors, and more.

Ruffalo Noel Levitz has developed an array of proven tools including software programs, diagnostics tools and instruments, web-based training programs, customized consultations, workshops, and national conferences. With the Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys, the firm brings together its many years of research and campus-based experience to enable you to get to the heart of your campus agenda.

### For More Information

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### Contact Us

Refer to the General Interpretive Guide or contact us for guidance on further interpretation of your results. For general questions about reviewing your results or to order materials for a future administration, please contact:

- Julie Bryant, Associate Vice President of Retention Solutions, [Julie.Bryant@RuffaloNL.com](mailto:Julie.Bryant@RuffaloNL.com)
- Shannon Cook, Director of Retention Solutions, [Shannon.Cook@RuffaloNL.com](mailto:Shannon.Cook@RuffaloNL.com)

You may also like to take advantage of an in-depth report discussion phone call at no charge or to explore opportunities to have a consultant come to campus to present your results (additional fees apply).

### Visit the Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys Client Resource Site

This link is appropriate for all surveys in this survey family: [www.noellevitz.com/SSIClient](http://www.noellevitz.com/SSIClient)

Enter your email address and log-in information.

(Note: If you cannot remember your log-in information, please request your log-in be sent to you immediately, using the indicated link). If you are unable to access the client community, please contact Ruffalo Noel Levitz.

### Resources include

- National group demographic details and lists of participating institutions
- Links to the current National Satisfaction and Priorities Report
- Details on upcoming client events
- Recent presentations on satisfaction assessment topics
- And more...

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