Tennessee State University
2011–2012
Alumni Satisfaction Survey Report

Submitted to:
The Tennessee Higher Education Commission(THEC)
For Performance Funding
July 2012

SUSTAINING THE LEGACY
EXCELLENCE · RESILIENCE
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UNITY
TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
1912-2012

Analysis by Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment, Division of Academic Affairs

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following major findings emerged from analysis of the survey results:

- A higher response rate from alumni from the College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences.[1]
- High rates of full-time employment amongst Tennessee State University alumni.
- Overall positive perceptions of experiences at Tennessee State University and the intention to recommend the University to others.
- Less than one third of alumni expressed satisfaction for the quality of a number of on-campus services, suggesting a need for continual improvement in those areas
- Positive appraisal of academic and social skills gained at the University.
- Nearly two thirds of alumni contributing toward volunteer, monetary, or outreach activities.
- Activities were identified that could bring alumni back to the University.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tennessee State University (TSU) is an Historically Black College/University (HBCU) located in Nashville, TN. The university is a 1890 land-grant institution, and is middle Tennessee's first public Carnegie Doctoral Research Institution. Underlying values that have been identified in the University's mission statement and motto include: a commitment to scholarly inquiry and research, purposeful work, and a commitment to service, simply put, "Think, Work, Serve." These three values, in addition to the values of excellence, accountability, integrity, and diversity, have been the driving force behind the university's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan, which has now been aligned with the 2010 Complete College Tennessee Act. The Strategic Plan goals and expectations include five key performance indicators (KPI): Access and Diversity; Academic Quality and Student Success; Business-Friendly Practices; Revenue Generation/Research/Resourcefulness; and Engagement.

The KPI of most importance to the current project is that of Business-Friendly Practices. Under this KPI, the University seeks to improve performance by assessing the quality of its core academic and business functions. One way the university is achieving this is through the recent implementation of the *Tennessee State University Alumni Satisfaction Survey Proposal* that was developed in Summer 2011 and approved by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) as part of the requirements for Performance Funding.

II. RESEARCH QUESTION

How do TSU alumni perceive the quality of programs and services provided at Tennessee State University in the following areas: Alumni Outcomes, Student Engagement/Competencies, Business Processes and, Services, and Alumni Giving Opportunities? [2]

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[1] Names of colleges in the report reflect the organization of colleges at the time of the student's enrollment at the University.

[2] Alumni Outcomes include data pertaining to employment characteristics. Student Engagement/Competencies contain information relating to overall engagement experiences and competency development in seven categories. Quality of Business Process rates quality of service provided by various departments or offices on campus. Alumni Giving and Communication Opportunities measure contribution of alumni to TSU and preferred methods of communications and interactions with the University.

III. METHODOLOGY

The major goals of the current project are to assess alumni overall perceptions about the programs and services provided at Tennessee State University, as well as their satisfaction in the following areas: Alumni Outcomes, Student Engagement/Competencies, Business Processes, and Alumni Giving Opportunities. The sample population for the survey derived from official alumni data reported through the TSU Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research.

SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION

The target population of the 2011 Tennessee State University Alumni Satisfaction Survey was comprised of alumni who graduated during the following academic calendar years: 2006-2007, 2008-2009, and 2009-2010. All colleges, departments, and academic majors were included in the sample. Alumni with both undergraduate and graduate degrees were included in the sample. The data base contained approximately 2000 alumni. The survey developed by the Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment, in collaboration with the Office of Alumni Relations, Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, and Academic Affairs Division was comprised of ten quantitative questions that were approved by THEC. The university employed the use of an electronic survey management system called *Qualtrics Survey Software* to assist with the dissemination of the instrument and the collection of data. The survey was first disseminated electronically on October 24, 2011. Three rounds of invitations to participate were sent to alumni from the selected graduation years via email. The survey was prefaced with a cover letter from University President, Dr. Portia Shields, providing information on the purpose and intended use of the survey (see Appendix A). The second and third follow-up emails were sent on November 17, 2011 and November 28, 2011, respectively.

RESPONSE RATE

A total of 140 cases were included in the initial dataset, representing an approximate 7.0% response rate from the approximately 2,000 alumni graduating during the specified period.   Removal of data from the analysis occurred due to: two instances of "test data"; eight instances of alumni from other graduation years responding; twenty-six instances of responses to two or fewer items; and six instances in which the participant responded to one-third or fewer items. A total of 98 surveys were retained for the final sample analysis.

IV. FINDINGS

This section summarizes the results from the 2011 Tennessee State University Alumni Satisfaction Survey. The results should be interpreted with caution, and future surveys and analyses are recommended. Given response patterns and the possibility of sampling bias, the results should only be used to identify trends, and should not be generalized to the entire population of the Tennessee State University Alumni. The report is organized into five sections: a) Demographic Information, b) Alumni Outcomes, c) Engagement/Competencies, d) Business Processes and Services, and e) Alumni Giving and Communication Outcomes.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Of the academic years represented on the survey, there appeared to be an even distribution of participants that graduated from the University during academic years 2006-2007(30.6%) and 2008-2009 (29.6%), compared to academic year 2009-2010 (39.8%): Table 1.

Table 1: Year Graduated

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2006-7	30	30.6	30.6	30.6
	2008-9	29	29.6	29.6	60.2
	2009-10	39	39.8	39.8	100.0
	Total	98	100.0	100.0	

The largest proportion of Alumni responding to the survey indicated that their degrees had been awarded from the College of Education (30.9%) followed by the College of Arts and Sciences (24.7%; Table 2). This result was consistent when analyses by year were conducted. Full data is not reported due to small sub-sample sizes for each college.

Table 2: Academic College Affiliation

College From Which Degree was Awarded	Frequency	Percent (%)
College of -		
- Arts and Sciences	**24**	**24.7**
- Business	11	11.2
- Education	**30**	**30.9**
- Engineering	4	4.1
- Engineering, Technology & Computer Science	1	1.0
- Health Sciences	8	7.1
- Public Service and Urban Affairs	5	5.1
Other -		
- School of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences	4	4.1
- School of Nursing	11	11.3
Total	97	99.0
Missing	1	1.0
Grand Total	98	100.0

Participants reported obtaining degrees from 32 of the 46 academic departments listed on the survey, with the Departments of Psychology (14.28%), Education Administration (11.22%), and Nursing (9.18%) being best represented in the survey responses (Table 3). Further analysis was prevented due to the small frequency of occurrence for the majority of the departments.

Table 3: Academic Department Affiliation

Academic Department from Which Degree was Awarded	Frequency	Percent
Accounting and Business Law	2	2.04
Agricultural Sciences	3	3.06
Architectural Sciences	1	1.02
Arts and Sciences	5	5.10
Biological Sciences	1	1.02
Business Administration	7	7.14
Business Information Systems	2	2.04
Chemistry	1	1.02
Civil and Environmental Engineering	1	1.02
Communication	4	4.08
Computer Science	2	2.04
Criminal Justice	2	2.04
Dental Hygiene	1	1.02
Economics and Finance	1	1.02
Educational Administration	11	11.22
Electrical and Computer Engineering	2	2.04
Family and Consumer Science	1	1.02
Health Care Administration and Planning	1	1.02
Health Sciences	2	2.04
Medical Technology	1	1.02
Music	1	1.02
Nursing	9	9.18
Physical Therapy	1	1.02
Physics and Mathematics	1	1.02
Psychology	14	14.28
Public Administration	4	4.08
Social Work	1	1.02
Sociology	1	1.02
Speech Pathology and Audiology	4	4.08
Teaching and Learning	6	6.12
Urban Studies	1	1.02
Total	97	99.8
Missing	1	1.02
Grand Total	98	100.0

SECTION B: ALUMNI OUTCOMES

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

The majority of the alumni indicated that they were currently <u>employed</u> on a full-time basis (82.7%; n=81), with 9. % (n=9) indicating that they were employed on a part-time basis, and 4.1 % (n=4) indicating that they were not currently employed (Table 4).

Table 4: Employment Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Full-time	81	82.7	82.7	82.7
	Part-time	9	9.2	9.2	91.8
	Full-time caretaking	1	1.0	1.0	92.9
	Unemployed	4	4.1	4.1	96.9
	Not in the workforce by choice	3	3.1	3.1	100.0
	Total	98	100.0	100.0	

SALARY RANGE

When asked about their salary range, 21.2% (n=24) of alumni reported that their income was between $0 and $24,999, while 13.3% (n=15) stated that their salary was between $25,000 and $34,999, and 15% (n=17) reported that their salary ranged between $35,000 and $44,999 (See Table A12). Additionally, 36.3% (n=41) of alumni stated that their household income was less than $50,000, while 24.8% (n=28) indicated that their household income was between $50,001 and $100,000, and 14.2% (n=16) stated that they preferred not to answer (see Table 5). Salary range could be a contributing factor to why a large number of alumni indicated that they have not contributed to the University in the last three years.

Table 5: Current Salary Range

		Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	0-24,999	22	22.4	23.4	23.4
	25,000-34,999	10	10.2	10.6	34.0
	35,000-44,999	16	16.3	17.0	51.1
	45,000-54,999	14	14.3	14.9	66.0
	55,000-64,999	8	8.2	8.5	74.5
	65,000-74,999	8	8.2	8.5	83.0
	75,000-84,999	3	3.1	3.2	86.2
	85,000-94,999	2	2.0	2.1	88.3
	Prefer Not to Answer	11	11.2	11.7	100.0
	Total	94	95.9	100.0	
Missing	System	4	4.1		
Total		98	100.0		

SECTION C: STUDENT ENGAGEMENT/COMPETENCIES

Regarding their <u>overall perceptions</u> of their engagement experiences at Tennessee State University, 19.4% (n=19) rated their experience as *excellent*, 44.9 % (n=44) of alumni rated their overall experience at the university as *good* and 19.4% (n=19) rated their experience as *fair* (Table 6).

Table 6: Overall Experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Excellent	19	19.4	21.6	21.6
	Good	44	44.9	50.0	71.6
	Fair	19	19.4	21.6	93.2
	Poor	3	3.1	3.4	96.6
	Very Poor	3	3.1	3.4	100.0
	Total	88	89.8	100.0	
Missing	System	10	10.2		
Total		98	100.0		

Of the alumni that responded to the survey, 72.4% (n=71) indicated that they would <u>recommend</u> Tennessee State University to others, while 15.3% (n=15) indicated that they would not recommend the University to others (See Table 7).

Table 7: Recommendation of TSU

		Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	71	72.4	82.6	82.6
	No	15	15.3	17.4	100.0
	Total	86	87.8	100.0	
Missing	System	12	12.2		
Total		98	100.0		

Participants were asked to rate the quality of <u>competency development</u> (skills, knowledge, and abilities) during their time at TSU. Participants rated competency development (Table 8) as *good* to *excellent* for five of the seven categories (Oral/written communications, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, content knowledge, and professional self-confidence). Competencies in numeracy and networking were rated more frequently as *fair* to *good*.

Table 8: Competency development from TSU

TSU-developed Competencies	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Very Poor	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Oral/written communications	25	25.5	43	43.9	11	11.2	5	5.1	3	3.1
Numeracy	13	13.3	38	38.8	26	26.5	6	6.1	4	4.1
Interpersonal skills	30	30.6	41	41.8	8	8.2	4	4.1	3	3.1
Leadership Skills	26	26.5	37	37.8	11	11.2	3	3.1	3	3.1
Content Knowledge	31	31.6	38	38.8	9	9.2	2	2.0	5	5.1
Professional Self-confidence	34	34.7	34	34.7	8	8.2	7	7.1	4	4.1
Networking	18	18.4	28	28.6	19	19.4	10	10.2	10	10.2

SECTION D: QUALITY OF BUSINESS PROCESSES & SERVICES

Participants were asked to rate the quality of services provided by various department or offices on campus (Table 9). These organizations were most likely to receive their highest proportion of respondents rating them as *good*, with the exception of Financial Aid, Bursar's Office, Admissions/ Registrar's, Residence Halls, and Transportation. The Library's technology received the overall highest quality rating, followed by the Bookstore. With one exception, no office/department was given a *very poor* rating by more than 10% of the sample.

Table 9: Quality of On-Campus Services

Service	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		Very Poor	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Academic advisement	14	14.3	35	35.7	18	18.4	12	12.2	8	8.2
Library (print & other resources)	27	27.6	34	34.7	23	23.5	2	2.0	1	1.0
Library (technology, access)	31	31.6	35	35.7	16	16.3	5	5.1	1	1.0
Financial Aid	11	11.2	19	19.4	18	18.4	17	17.3	14	14.3
Bursar's Office	8	8.2	24	24.5	32	32.7	18	18.4	4	4.1
Admissions/Registrar's	12	12.2	21	21.4	33	33.7	13	13.3	6	6.1
Career Development Center	4	4.1	28	28.6	19	19.4	12	12.2	6	6.1
Student Health Center	6	6.1	23	23.5	27	27.6	10	10.2	4	4.1
Learning Resources Center	6	6.1	29	29.6	22	22.4	8	8.2	3	3.1
Bookstore	17	17.3	43	43.9	20	20.4	4	4.1	2	2.0
Cafeteria	9	9.2	36	36.7	21	21.4	5	5.1	3	3.1
Wellness Center	17	17.3	34	34.7	12	12.2	4	4.1	1	1.0
Residence Halls	4	4.1	17	17.3	29	29.6	7	7.1	4	4.1
Other Student Services	4	4.1	20	20.4	23	23.5	7	7.1	2	2.0
Major Faculty	29	29.6	33	33.7	16	16.3	2	2.0	6	6.1
Minor Faculty	19	19.4	22	22.4	18	18.4	3	3.1	1	1.0
Other Faculty	15	15.3	28	28.6	25	25.5	3	3.1	2	2.0

Maintenance/cleaning	9	9.2	28	28.6	21	21.4	8	8.2	7	7.1
Police	8	8.2	27	27.6	24	24.5	11	11.2	6	6.1
Transportation	9	9.2	19	19.4	25	25.5	6	6.1	3	3.1

SECTION E: ALUMNI GIVING AND COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES

The alumni that responded to the survey indicated that they had given back to the institution in the following ways: *volunteering time* (27.6%, n=27), *donation* (24.5%, n=24%), and *outreach to potential students* (40.8%, n=40). Regarding contributions made to the University within the last 3 years, 34.7% (n=34) of Alumni stated that they had contributed, while 53.1% (n=52) indicated that they had not contributed (Table 10).

Table 10: Contribution over last 3 Years

		Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	34	34.7	39.5	39.5
	No	52	53.1	60.5	100.0
	Total	86	87.8	100.0	
Missing	System	12	12.2		
Total		98	100.0		

Further examination of the data indicated a relationship between contributing to TSU and several other variables. Overall, 62.2% of the respondents reported some type of donation – of time, money, or outreach efforts). Examination of the categories of donations (volunteering time, monetary donation, and outreach) found that 52.7% of those donating did so through volunteering, while 63.9% did so through monetary donations, and 61.1% did so through outreach to potential applicants (Table 11). Those that responded that they did not contribute in the last three years and those that did not respond to the contribution question still indicated that they volunteered their time (16.2% and 33.3%, respectively), donated to TSU (3.5% and 0.0%, respectively), and engaged in outreach (35.7% and 33.3%, respectively). Furthermore, 11.2% of the sample reported engaging in all three forms of contributions, while 14.3% engaged in two forms, and 37.8% engaged in one form of contributing. Finally, it should be noted that contributing to TSU in the last three years was significantly correlated (Table 10) with alumni report of their overall experience at TSU ($r = .535$, $p = .000$) and their willingness to recommend TSU to others ($r = .516$, $p = .000$). Interestingly, these latter two variables were (overall experience and willingness to recommend TSU to others) were strongly correlated ($r = .780$, $p = .000$)

Table 11: Comparison of Responses to Contributing in Last Three Years and Type of Contribution

	Contribution in the last 3 Years?		
	No Response	Yes	No
Type of Contribution	(n=6)	(n=36)	(n=56)
Volunteering Time	2 (33.3%)	18 (50.0%)	9 (16.1%)
Donation	0	23 (63.8%)	2 (3.6%)
Outreach	2 (33.3%)	22 (61.1%)	20 (35.7%)

PREFERRED METHODS OF ALUMNI GIVING/CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNIVERSITY

Alumni were asked to rate their preferences for making contributions to the University. The two preferred methods for making contributions included: Online (26.5%, n=26), and electronically (37.8%, n=37). This would suggest a greater preference for electronic technology as the preferred mode of contribution for recent alumni.

ALUMNI INTERACTIONS WITH THE UNIVERSITY

The Alumni Relations Office is interested in planning events that are attractive to the alumni of the University. Alumni indicated that they would attend the following University affiliated events: professional development workshops in their field (44.9%, n=44), professional conferences (40.8%, n=40), alumni mixers/social networking (39.8%, n=39), student performances (32.7%, n=32), outside speakers (27.6%, n=27), and class reunions (25.5%, n=25).

Other types of events that would draw alumni to campus included: homecoming, commencement, band activities, community service/outreach, and recruitment events for Graduate School that bring in Alumni to represent the University.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

INTERPRETATION AND IMPLICATIONS

- In the current economic times, the high percentage (82.7%) of Tennessee State University Alumni that indicated that they are currently employed full-time reflects well on their academic- and skills-based credentials.

- Alumni perceptions of the University were generally positive, with the vast majority stating that they had good and excellent experiences (see Table 6), and would recommend the university to others in the future (see Table 7). This suggests that the University has met these alumni's needs.

- Less than one-third of alumni expressed satisfaction for the quality of a number of on-campus services, suggesting a need for continual improvement in those areas (see Table 9).

LIMITATIONS

- One limitation of the current project is the small sample size that is not generalizable to the larger population of Tennessee State University alumni given the University's long history.

- Another limitation is the low response rate from the alumni population sampled.

- The analysis was done using alumni responses with complete data. Alumni who did not respond to the majority of the questions were excluded from the analysis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to collect data to increase the response rate by emphasizing the impact of the survey on state funding and continual improvements in program and service quality.

- Examine the patterns of non-response to modify the administration of the survey.

- Use focus groups to revise and improve survey instrument and instructions.

- Consider utilizing the top two preferred methods of communication that alumni indicated in the survey (electronic format and hard-copy) to strengthen alumni contribution to the University.

- Use results of the survey to design new practices and procedures for improving overall student and alumni experience.

APPENDIX A: LETTER OF INVITATION FROM PRESIDENT PORTIA SHIELDS

The following is a copy of the cover letter that accompanied the email that was sent out to Tennessee State University Alumni that were invited to participate in the 2011 Alumni Satisfaction Survey:

As a Tennessee State University (TSU) alumnus, your continued support is highly valued. In an effort to measure the quality of your education at TSU, we are surveying graduates to obtain feedback on your experiences at TSU, to determine how well the University prepared you for employment and your role in society. We will use your responses to continue to make improvements in institutional quality, affecting the quality of education for students who will follow behind you. Your voice will count.

We request the survey be completed without delay, as your opinion is vital to our continuous programmatic advancement. Your name will not appear on the survey and therefore your individual responses will be kept completely confidential. The data collected will be reported in aggregate and made available to university administrators for programmatic planning and improvements in institutional quality.

We wish you continued success in your career. Thank you very much for your participation in this important evaluation process. https://tnstateu.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_2cAcGhx8oOVNrQo

Follow this link to the Survey:
Take the Survey

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
https://tnstateu.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=6ShG2mBRBcvnP2A_2cAcGhx8oOVNrQo&_=1

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
Click here to unsubscribe

As a Tennessee State University (TSU) alumnus, your continued support is highly valued. In an effort to measure the quality of your education at TSU, we are surveying graduates to obtain feedback on your experiences at TSU, to determine how well the University prepared you for employment and your role in society, and to use your responses to continue to make improvements in institutional quality.

We request the survey be completed without delay, as your opinion is vital to our continuous programmatic advancement. Your name will not appear on the survey and therefore your individual responses will be kept completely confidential. Your voice will count. The data collected will be reported in aggregate and made available to university administrators for programmatic planning and improvements in institutional quality.

We wish you continued success in your career. Thank you very much for your participation in this important evaluation process.

To proceed to the survey click Yes, I will complete the survey. To exit, click No, I do not wish to participate. (Next Page)

Please indicate the year in which you graduated from the university and the major for which you were awarded a degree. (Students will be able to choose from an on-line drop down list to indicate their major)

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. What is your current employment?

    _____

    2. What is your current salary range?
    a. $0-$24,999
    b. $25,000 - $34,999
    c. $35,000 -$44, 999
    d. $45,000 - $54,999
    e. $55,000 - $64, 999
    f. $65,000-$74,999
    g. $75,000-84999
    h. $85,000-$94,999
    i. $95,000-$104,999
    j. $105,000 & above

3. How would you rate your degree benefit based on your skills in oral and written communication, your interpersonal skills, and your level of confidence to function as a professional after graduation?
    a. Excellent (5)
    b. Good (4)

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    c.   Fair (3)

    d.   Poor (2)

    e.   Very Poor (1)

4. How would you rate the quality of service you encountered in the areas of academic advisement, library services, financial aid, student services, and faculty performance?

    a.   Excellent (5)

    b.   Good (4)

    c.   Fair (3)

    d.   Poor (2)

    e.   Very Poor (1)

5. How would you rate your overall experiences during matriculation at this institution?

    a.   Excellent (5)

    b.   Good (4)

    c.   Fair (3)

    d.   Poor (2)

    e.   Very Poor (1)

6. Would you recommend TSU to others?

    a.   Yes

    b.   No

7. In what capacity have you given back to the institution?

    a.   Volunteering time

    b.   Donation

    c.   Outreach

8. Have you made a contribution to the University within the last three years?

    a.   Yes

    b.   No

9. Rank your preference for making a contribution to the University:

    a.   Online

    b.   Mail Appeal

    c.   By Phone

    d.   Text Giving

10. Which type of events are you likely to attend:

    a.   Class Reunion

    b.   Alumni Mixer/Social Networking

    c.   Fundraiser

    d.   Student Performance (plays/concerts)