

College Outcomes Survey Report 2013-14

Introduction

The College Outcomes Survey (COS) was conducted in April 2014 to 491 undergraduate students by OIRA staff members in the classrooms. A representative sample of 53 course sections totaling 1141 students was selected. ACT has stopped its surveys but they granted AUB the right to keep using items of the survey. So OIRA staff members developed a revised form that includes items most relevant to AUB needs, and are needed for strategic planning and other assessments, the final version of the form included 113 items.

The sample was composed of 49% and 51% males and females, respectively. Breakdown of the sample by class is reported in Table 1:

Table 1. Sample Distribution by Class

Class Level	Number of Students	Percentage
Freshman	17	3.7
Sophomore	190	41
Graduate	1	0.2
Special	1	0.2
Junior	159	34
Senior	80	17
Year 4	13	3
Prospective Graduate	1	0.2
Total	462	100

Results

This year's results were, in general, quite similar to previous years with some areas continuing to show a downward trend. Results are reported by section

Table 2 reports highest and lowest five items in terms of importance and progress made in attaining outcomes at the University. As evident from the Table, this year's performance showed improvement on two items and is relatively stable on other items but is lower than the norms on the top five items. Highest items on which progress was made in last four years were: *'learning to think and reason'*, *'developing openness to new ideas and practices'* and *'developing problem-solving skills'*. *'Thinking objectively about beliefs, attitudes, and values'* and *'Locating, screening, and organizing information'* have gained importance in last two years. With respect to lowest items, it has always been *'developing effective job-seeking skills'* and it is also lower than norms but similar to last year.

Table 3 reports extent of agreement with statements about the college. The top items are the same as in previous years and they reveal quite stable evaluations. Only one went up ‘*My experiences here have equipped me to deal with possible career changes*’ and two went down. ‘*I am proud of my accomplishments at this college*’ and ‘*This college welcomes and uses feedback from students to improve the college*’. Highest items are ‘*AUB is equally supportive of women and men*’ and ‘*I would recommend this college to others*’.

Table 2. Progress made in Attaining Outcomes

HIGHEST 5 ITEMS	Mean 13-14	Mean 12-13	Mean 11-12	Mean 10-11	Mean 09-10	Norms 10-11
6. Learning to think and reason	3.8	3.7	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0
8. Thinking objectively about beliefs, attitudes, and values	3.7	3.6				3.8
13. Developing openness to new ideas and practices	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8
5. Developing problem-solving skills	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7		3.9
7. Locating, screening, and organizing information	3.6	3.7				3.7
LOWEST 5 ITEMS	Mean 13-14	Mean 12-13	Mean 11-12	Mean 10-11	Mean 09-10	Norms 10-11
9. Developing my creativity; generating original ideas and products	3.4	3.4			3.1	3.7
20. Learning about the role of science and technology in society	3.4	3.3				3.4
21. Understanding and applying math concepts and statistical reasoning	3.3	3.2				3.4
15. Appreciating the fine arts, music, literature, and the humanities	3.1	3.2		3.3		3.4
17. Developing effective job-seeking skills (e.g., interviewing, resume construction)	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.4

Table 4 reports highest and lowest items on which personal growth occurred in the past year. In general, there is consistency in areas of growth with top 3 items remaining the same: ‘*taking responsibility for own behavior*’, ‘*interacting well with people from other cultures*’, ‘*becoming more willing to change and learn new things*’. Half of the top ten items went down, while one improved ‘*Interacting well with people from cultures other than my own*’ and four remained the same. The lowest three items remained the same and in general most of the items revealed same level of growth, except for three that went down.

Table 3. Views of the College

	Av. 13-14	Av. 12-13	Av. 11-12	Av. 10-11	Av. 09-10	Norms 10-11
82. This college is equally supportive of women and men.	3.9	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.0
81. I would recommend this college to others.	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.1
79. If choosing a college I would choose this one.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.8
80. My experiences here have equipped me to deal with possible career changes.	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.8
83. I am proud of my accomplishments at this college.	3.5	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.3	4.3
78. This college has helped me meet the goals I came here to achieve.	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.6	4.3	4.1
84. This college welcomes and uses feedback from students to improve the college.	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.8	3.8

Table 4. Personal Growth

HIGHEST 10 ITEMS	Av. 13-14	Av. 12-13	Av. 11-12	Av. 10-11	Av. 09-10	Norms 10-11
24. Interacting well with people from cultures other than my own	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.9
31. Taking responsibility for my own behavior	3.8	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
41. Becoming more willing to change and learn new things	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
23. Becoming more willing to consider opposing points of view	3.7	3.7				3.9
27. Learning to be adaptable, tolerant, and willing to negotiate	3.7	3.7				3.8
32. Clarifying my personal values	3.6	3.7	4.0		4.1	4.0
36. Becoming academically competent	3.6	3.7				4.1
25. Preparing to cope with changes as they occur (e.g., in career, relationships, lifestyle)	3.6	3.6				4.0
44. Acquiring a well-rounded General Education	3.6	3.7		4.1	4.1	4.1
42. Improving my ability to stay with projects until they are finished	3.6	3.7	4.0	4.0		4.0

LOWEST 10 ITEMS	Av. 13-14	Av. 12-13	Av. 11-12	Av. 10-11	Av. 09-10	Norms 10-11
43. Becoming a more effective member in a multicultural society	3.5	3.5				3.8
34. Developing moral principles to guide my actions and decisions	3.5	3.5				3.9
22. Becoming an effective team or group member	3.5	3.5				3.9
30. Understanding religious values that differ from my own	3.5					
38. Constructively expressing both emotions and ideas	3.4	3.4	3.7		3.8	3.9
39. Understanding myself, my talents, and my interests	3.4	3.5	3.8			4.0
26. Developing leadership skills	3.4	3.5				4.0
33. Learning how to manage finances (personal, family, or business)	3.4	3.3	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8
28. Becoming more aware of local and national political and social issues	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.6
29. Recognizing my rights, responsibilities, and privileges as a citizen	3.2	3.2	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7

Table 5 reports satisfaction with given aspects of the university, and highest items have been the same in last few years though with lower satisfaction. Security on campus, social activities, college in general, library services, etc has been most recurrent items (shaded grey). Most of the items dropped from last year, highest was in personal security/safety on campus. With respect to lowest items of satisfaction, quality of academic advising and concern for student as individual have been persistently lowest items. In addition, faculty respect for students and having more informal contact with students were mentioned as items needing improvement.

With respect to the lowest items, the most recurrent items are the same: 54. *Flexible degree requirements*, *Faculty respect for students*, *Quality of academic advising*, and *Concern for me as an individual*. Most of the items improved except for *Faculty respect for students* which went down. Significant improvement was noted on '*Quality of academic advising*' and '*Flexible degree requirements*'. Lower than the norm on all items.

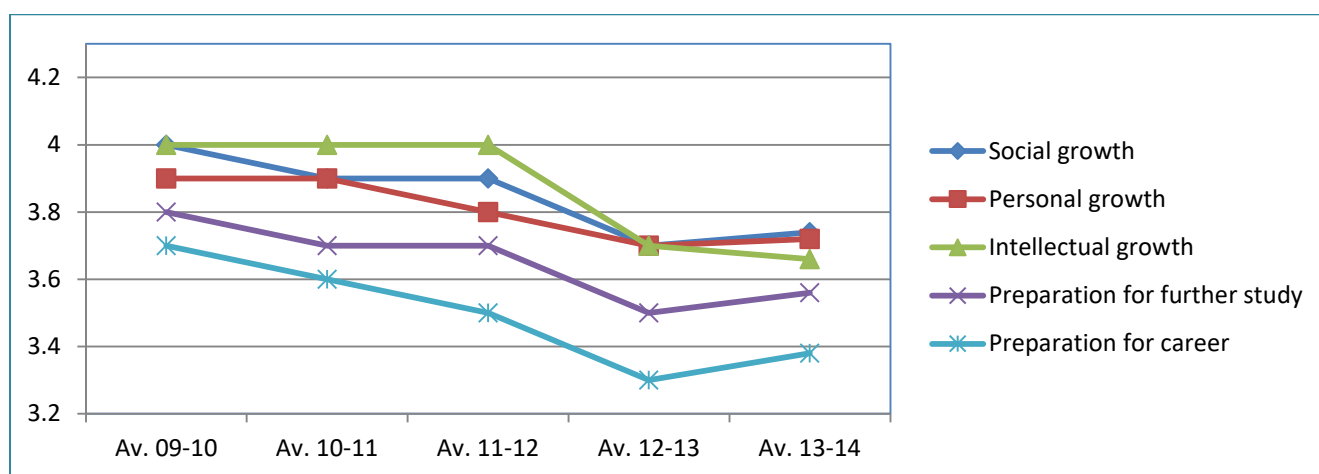
Table 5. College Experience

HIGHEST 10 ITEMS	Av. 13-14	Av. 12-13	Av. 11-12	Av. 10-11	Av. 09-10	Norms 10-11
62. College response to students with special needs (e.g., disabled, handicapped)	3.7	3.9		3.8	3.8	3.8
57. Language development services for students whose first language is NOT English	3.7	3.8				3.6
59. Freedom from harassment on campus	3.7	3.8		3.8		3.8
60. Personal security/safety on campus	3.6	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.8
77. This college in general	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.9	4.1
65. Opportunities for involvement in campus activities	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.8
75. Transfer of course credits from other colleges to this college	3.6					
64. College social activities	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7
74. Library /learning resources center services	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.9	4.0
73. Student access to computer facilities and services	3.5					
LOWEST 10 ITEMS	Av. 13-14	Av. 12-13	Av. 11-12	Av. 10-11	Av. 09-10	Norms 10-11
56. Residence hall services and programs	3.4					
76. Variety of courses offered	3.4	3.3		3.5		3.8
46. Quality of instruction	3.4					
68. Practical work experiences offered in areas related to my major	3.3	3.2				3.6
49. Informal contact with faculty in non-academic settings	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.9
54. Flexible degree requirements	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.8
72. Financial aid services	3.2					
45. Faculty respect for students	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.4		4.1
51. Quality of academic advising	3.1	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.9
48. Concern for me as an individual	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.9

Table 6 reports overall growth and contribution of college to that growth. Social, personal and intellectual growths are the same as last year, though lower than previous years and lower than the norms. There has been an improvement on '*Preparation for further study*' and '*Preparation for career*'. Figure 1 highlights the trend. All areas of growth are lower than the norms though previously were equal or higher than norms (social growth, for example).

Table 6. College Contribution to Growth and Preparation

	Av. 13-14	Av. 12-13	Av. 11-12	Av. 10-11	Av. 09-10	Norms 10-11
87. Social growth (understanding others and their views, adapting successfully to a variety of social situations)	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.8
86. Personal growth (developing self-understanding, self-discipline, and mature attitudes, values, and goals)	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.9
85. Intellectual growth (acquiring knowledge, skills, ideas, concepts, analytical thinking)	3.7	3.7	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.1
88. Preparation for further study	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.8	4.0
89. Preparation for career	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.9

Figure 1. Trend in Growth over 2009-13.

Results by Class Level

Tables 7-11 reports results by class level. With respect to progress made, seniors had highest averages on nearly all learning outcomes, with freshmen showing similar progress on developing problem solving skills and thinking objectively about beliefs and values. Sophomore, in general had lowest averages on progress, except for developing effective job seeking skills where freshmen had lowest average. Interesting that freshmen students had highest average on understanding and applying math concepts and appreciating fine arts, music and literature and this is probably because of the kind of courses they take in freshmen year.

With respect to personal growth (Table 8), same trend prevailed with both seniors and freshmen having largest progress in this domain and sophomore lowest. Exception was with some items in personal growth where freshmen had lowest scores like: developing leadership skills, becoming

an effective team member, and understanding myself and my interests. Such results are expected as this kind of development requires longer time and cumulative experience and we can see that juniors and seniors had significantly higher scores on these outcomes.

Table 7. Progress Made by Class Level

Highest 5 items in Progress (Total)	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
6. Learning to think and reason	3.71	3.8	3.74	3.96	3.8
8. Thinking objectively about beliefs, attitudes, and values	3.94	3.67	3.68	3.81	3.7
13. Developing openness to new ideas and practices	3.71	3.54	3.67	3.87	3.7
5. Developing problem-solving skills	3.82	3.56	3.64	3.78	3.6
7. Locating, screening, and organizing information	3.35	3.48	3.7	3.82	3.6
Lowest 5 items in Progress (Total)	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
9. Developing my creativity; generating original ideas and products	4	3.23	3.39	3.56	3.39
20. Learning about the role of science and technology in society	3.41	3.27	3.42	3.55	3.38
21. Understanding and applying math concepts and statistical reasoning	3.76	3.16	3.17	3.44	3.25
15. Appreciating the fine arts, music, literature, and the humanities	3.47	2.9	3.16	3.35	3.09
17. Developing effective job-seeking skills (e.g., interviewing, resume construction)	2.12	2.8	3.12	3.18	2.98

As for satisfaction with University (Table 9), freshmen have highest averages on all items, with lowest items being distributed among all other class levels, but especially among sophomores. Juniors have lowest on ‘if choosing a college I would choose this one’ and ‘this college helped me meet goals I came to achieve’.

With respect to overall growth (Table 10), freshmen showed highest averages on all domains while sophomores also had highest on personal and social growth. Seniors had, in general, lowest growth on nearly all domains except for ‘preparation for further study’.

Table 8. Personal Growth by Class

Highest 10 items in Personal Growth	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
24. Interacting well with people from cultures other than my own	3.88	3.8	3.95	3.9	3.86
31. Taking responsibility for my own behavior	4.19	3.71	3.72	4.01	3.78
41. Becoming more willing to change and learn new things	4	3.75	3.72	3.75	3.76
23. Becoming more willing to consider opposing points of view	3.88	3.62	3.71	3.84	3.69
27. Learning to be adaptable, tolerant, and willing to negotiate	3.63	3.57	3.71	3.85	3.67
32. Clarifying my personal values	3.81	3.54	3.59	3.72	3.61
36. Becoming academically competent	3.75	3.51	3.55	3.93	3.61
25. Preparing to cope with changes as they occur (e.g., in career, relationships, lifestyle)	4	3.48	3.58	3.82	3.6
44. Acquiring a well-rounded General Education	3.94	3.5	3.53	3.82	3.59
42. Improving my ability to stay with projects until they are finished	3.56	3.53	3.56	3.72	3.58
Lowest 10 items in Personal Growth	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
43. Becoming a more effective member in a multicultural society	3.38	3.43	3.66	3.61	3.54
34. Developing moral principles to guide my actions and decisions	3.63	3.49	3.56	3.62	3.53
22. Becoming an effective team or group member	2.88	3.39	3.65	3.57	3.51
30. Understanding religious values that differ from my own	4.25	3.46	3.39	3.64	3.5
38. Constructively expressing both emotions and ideas	3.31	3.3	3.45	3.6	3.4
39. Understanding myself, my talents, and my interests	3	3.35	3.48	3.43	3.4
26. Developing leadership skills	3.06	3.2	3.44	3.67	3.38
33. Learning how to manage finances (personal, family, or business)	3.38	3.25	3.44	3.46	3.35
28. Becoming more aware of local and national political and social issues	4.13	3.14	3.19	3.39	3.24
29. Recognizing my rights, responsibilities, and privileges as a citizen	3.63	3.16	3.13	3.24	3.19

Table 9. Satisfaction with University by Class

Agreement with Statement about College	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
82. This college is equally supportive of women and men.	4.47	3.79	3.85	3.79	3.86
81. I would recommend this college to others.	4.38	3.56	3.61	3.91	3.72
79. If choosing a college I would choose this one.	3.81	3.64	3.51	3.75	3.63
80. My experiences here have equipped me to deal with possible career changes.	3.75	3.53	3.48	3.6	3.55
83. I am proud of my accomplishments at this college.	3.67	3.36	3.52	3.54	3.5
78. This college has helped me meet the goals I came here to achieve.	3.67	3.36	3.37	3.42	3.4
84. This college welcomes and uses feedback from students to improve the college.	3.6	3.04	3.15	3.05	3.14

Table 10. College Contribution to Growth and Preparation by Class

	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
87. Social growth (understanding others and their views, adapting successfully to variety of social situations)	3.87	3.85	3.75	3.48	3.74
86. Personal growth (developing self-understanding, self-discipline, and mature attitudes, values, and goals)	3.8	3.82	3.7	3.58	3.72
85. Intellectual growth (acquiring knowledge, skills, ideas, concepts, analytical thinking)	3.67	3.63	3.74	3.56	3.66
88. Preparation for further study	3.87	3.54	3.53	3.57	3.56
89. Preparation for career	3.73	3.45	3.31	3.24	3.38

Table 11 reports satisfaction with certain aspects of the university. Freshmen seem to most satisfied and higher level students less so. Of interest is low average of quality of academic advising for freshmen and sophomore dissatisfaction with financial aid. Seniors are highly dissatisfied with practical work experiences offered in areas related to their major

Table 11. Satisfaction with Aspects by Class

Highest 10 Items	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
62. College response to students with special needs (e.g., disabled, handicapped)	4.5	3.67	3.79	3.58	3.73
57. Language development services for students whose first language is NOT English	4.56	3.6	3.56	3.77	3.66
59. Freedom from harassment on campus	4.5	3.69	3.62	3.51	3.66
60. Personal security/safety on campus	4.06	3.72	3.57	3.39	3.63
77. This college in general	4.44	3.64	3.52	3.58	3.63
65. Opportunities for involvement in campus activities	4.13	3.61	3.61	3.52	3.62
75. Transfer of course credits from other colleges to this college	3.81	3.57	3.77	3.38	3.6
64. College social activities	3.88	3.52	3.53	3.63	3.57
74. Library /learning resources center services	3.81	3.54	3.58	3.46	3.55
73. Student access to computer facilities and services	3.75	3.44	3.69	3.32	3.52
Lowest 10 Items	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
56. Residence hall services and programs	3.44	3.27	3.47	3.5	3.39
76. Variety of courses offered	3.5	3.53	3.45	3.11	3.39
46. Quality of instruction	3.56	3.38	3.26	3.43	3.35
68. Practical work experiences offered in areas related to my major	3.94	3.41	3.32	2.91	3.31
49. Informal contact with faculty in non-academic settings	3.75	3.25	3.2	3.11	3.22
54. Flexible degree requirements	3.19	3.26	3.18	3.11	3.21
72. Financial aid services	3.13	2.89	3.34	3.15	3.15
45. Faculty respect for students	3.81	3.13	3	3.08	3.13
51. Quality of academic advising	2.94	3.25	2.97	2.99	3.09
48. Concern for me as an individual	3.19	3.01	2.84	3.01	2.97

As for the additional items and supportive classroom practices (Table 12), seniors had highest averages on items revealing advanced status like ‘engaging in problem solving’, ‘working with classmates on projects’, ‘heard and worked with faculty on research’, etc. freshmen had highest averages on course design matters, on developing as a self learner, and on working with Writing Center. Freshmen had lowest on ‘working on a community based project’, received prompt

Table 12. Additional Items by Class

Additional Items	Fresh	Soph	Jr.	Sr.	Av.	2013	Diff
91. Course syllabi are usually distributed early on in the semester.	4.6	3.97	4.06	3.87	4.0	4.1	-.1
92. The syllabi usually included course outcomes.	4.67	3.86	3.88	3.95	3.9	4.0	-.1
102. I made a class presentation	4.07	3.7	3.83	4.06	3.9	4.0	-.1
93. The material covered in class was relevant to stated course objectives	4.6	3.72	3.84	3.75	3.8	3.8	-
103. I worked with other students on project during class	4	3.65	3.82	3.89	3.8	3.9	-.1
104. I worked with classmates outside class to prepare class assignments	3.93	3.77	3.65	3.98	3.8	3.8	-
101. I asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	3.33	3.66	3.79	3.85	3.8	3.7	+1
113. AUB experiences helped me develop as a self learner.	4.27	3.7	3.57	3.83	3.7	3.8	-0.1
90. The objectives of the courses that I have taken were clearly stated.	3.87	3.67	3.65	3.61	3.7	3.6	+0.1
107. I worked harder than I thought to meet the instructor's standards and expectations	3.8	3.49	3.55	3.88	3.6	3.6	-
97. Teachers clearly explained their grading policy to students at the beginning of courses.	4.2	3.61	3.42	3.57	3.6	3.6	-
106. I was motivated to do as well as I could in my classes.	3.47	3.63	3.38	3.88	3.6	3.5	+0.1
108. Campus environment emphasized time studying and academic work.	3.4	3.63	3.43	3.6	3.5	3.6	-0.1
94. There was adequate time to cover all course topics.	3.8	3.54	3.37	3.38	3.5	3.4	+0.1
95. I often engaged in problem- solving in class.	3.2	3.47	3.42	3.48	3.5	3.4	+0.1
98. Teachers usually evaluated student performance periodically.	3.33	3.66	3.21	3.37	3.4	3.3	+0.1
109. I have heard faculty refer to their research.	3	3.47	3.03	3.54	3.3	3.4	-0.1
96. Teachers usually invited students to relate outside events/activities to subjects covered in courses.	2.93	3.34	3.1	3.34	3.3	3.3	-
99. Teachers usually discussed performance and progress with students.	3	3.41	3.17	3.21	3.3	3.1	+0.2
112. I am satisfied with the services offered by the Writing Center.	3.53	3.29	3.08	3.34	3.2	3.3	+0.1
105. I participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	2.07	3.27	2.95	3.57	3.2	3.1	+0.1
110. I have talked with faculty members about my career plans.	2.6	3.09	3.03	3.29	3.1	2.9	+0.2
100. I received prompt feedback from faculty on my academic performance (written or oral)	2.67	2.96	3.2	3.18	3.1	2.9	+0.2
111. I have worked with a faculty member on research	1.73	2.75	2.59	3.19	2.8	2.7	+0.1

feedback, ‘teachers discussed performance with students’ (although sophomores had highest average on this item).

Comparing responses on additional items with previous year reveals improvement on more items with significant improvement showing on talking with faculty members about career plans, discussing progress and performance with faculty and receiving prompt feedback from them.

Conclusion.

Administering the College Outcomes Survey (COS) is very useful as it provides at the end of the year student perceptions about the University and areas they believe they have grown and developed in.

This year’s results were consistent with previous findings, yet there were some changes in some areas. In Progress in learning outcomes, the outcomes were similar to last year when new outcomes emerged. Developing effective job seeking skills has still lowest progress made, while learning math and science concepts, though low, showed improvement. Views of the college are the same with a decrease in ‘using student feedback to improve’ and ‘being proud of accomplishments at this college’. Both are much lower than norms. With respect to personal growth, there was a decrease on most of the items and only improvement was on ‘interacting with people from different cultures’. In evaluating college experience, most of the top items also went down, especially campus security. As for the lowest items, they improved especially quality of academic advising, concern for me as individual and flexible degree requirements. With respect to college contribution to growth, items remain same with an improvement in preparation for further study and for a career. So, main areas that need improvement are views of the college and personal growth.

With respect to class differences, newcomers had higher satisfaction with university than seniors, while students in upper grades showed higher progress on most of the outcomes, so need to work on maintaining satisfaction of students as they progress through college.

Additional items showed improvement especially with respect to interacting with faculty and receiving feedback on progress and performance.