

The Welcomer

Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association

Vol. 15 Issue 3

Summer 2006

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News and Information from the
Collegiate Information and
Visitor Services Association

Facilities Play a Key Role in Students' Enrollment Decisions, Study Finds

By AUDREY WILLIAMS JUNE, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

Do dormitories, libraries, academic buildings, and student unions *really* help colleges recruit — and keep — students? A new study sponsored by the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers says the answer is a clear-cut yes.

However, the buildings that matter most to students may not be the ones college administrators and others would expect.

“Buildings related to academics are the most important,” says David A. Cain, vice president and associate in the higher-education sector of Carter & Burgess, a consulting company. “Students really want to know what type of facilities are in their major.”

According to the survey, 73.6 percent of the respondents named facilities related to their majors as “extremely important” or “very important” in choosing a college. Other academic-oriented facilities — the library, technology, and classrooms — followed. Each of those was identified by about half the respondents. Residence halls, which have been an integral part of the recent campus building boom, were a key part of the selection process for 42.2 percent of students.

Students at 46 institutions in the United States and Canada participated in the online survey that produced the data for a report, “The Impact of Facilities on Recruitment and Retention of Students.” The survey, conducted in the spring of 2005, drew 16,153 respondents. But data from only the 13,782 students at American colleges were included in a recently released summary of the study.

The report’s authors, Mr. Cain and Gary L. Reynolds, facilities director at Colorado College, say their work updates a 1980s study by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. That study, considered landmark at the time, found that 62 percent of students surveyed said the

continued on next page

factor that most influenced them during a campus visit was the appearance of a college's grounds and buildings.

The new study done by APPA, as the facilities group is commonly known, reinforces the notion that the facilities students see — or do not see — on a campus can mean the difference between whether they enroll or not.

On students' must-see list during college visits were buildings housing their major, said 56.8 percent of respondents. Rounding out the top five were residence halls at 53.1 percent, the library at 48.4 percent, classrooms at 46 percent, and technology facilities at 40 percent. Nearly three out of 10 students spurned a college because it lacked a building or amenity they thought important. Chief among those were buildings that house or support the student's major, and open space.

Inadequate or poorly maintained facilities, particularly dormitories, were almost as important as the absence of a facility. Twenty-six percent of respondents rejected an institution because an important building was inadequate, and 16.6 percent nixed a college because an important facility was poorly maintained.

Role of Race and Gender

The study also revealed how demographic differences, such as race and gender, play a role in how students view campus facilities. For instance, female respondents wanted to see dormitories, facilities related to their majors, the library, classrooms, the student union, and open space during a campus visit. However, male students were most interested in seeing an institution's computer and technology capabilities, research and lab facilities, and varsity athletics facilities, Mr. Reynolds says.

The survey's respondents, who ranged from freshmen to graduate students, were 68 percent female and 32 percent male. (A few questions were tested using a

gender-balanced subset of respondents, which gave the researchers "some assurance" that the gender imbalance did not significantly skew the results.) Nearly half of the respondents were enrolled at public institutions with more than 25,000 students.

Over all, 66 percent of students said they were "extremely satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the facilities on their campus.

Mr. Reynolds says senior college officials could find the study useful when deciding how to maximize the impact on enrollment of a limited facilities budget. For instance, "if you're trying to recruit chemistry majors and you have a run-down chemistry building, you might want to put some money into fixing that," he says. Admissions and housing officials could benefit from the study, too, the authors say.

Meanwhile, presidents armed with data from the report can make a case to their trustees, or even their legislators, for "developing policies around what students want," Mr. Cain says. "The students have spoken."

At any rate, colleges that have neglected their facilities can no longer afford to ignore their importance, the report's authors say. "Long-range planning for new construction and the repair and replacement of existing facilities and infrastructure must be a guiding principle within the context of the institution's strategic plans and overall academic mission," wrote Mr. Cain in an e-mail message.

WHAT STUDENTS LOOK FOR IN PICKING A COLLEGE

A new study by the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers shows the extent to which students are concerned about campus facilities and their upkeep.

Concluded on page 4

American University hosts CiVSA's Thirteenth Annual Conference!

CiVSA's Annual Conference was held in Washington, DC this year, with more than 100 participants from over 50 colleges and universities.

Our keynote speaker, Joan Fox, taught us about customer service – how to outwit, outlast, and outserve those who try to lower your level of service. She taught us strategies such as hiring the right people, assessing your service, aligning policies, modeling good service, revising your internal culture, and much more. Remember, service is the only product that you can never recall.

There were twelve sessions full of informative ideas, covering everything from intercultural communication to creative campus tours to leaving stress behind. We also had seven concurrent roundtable discussions, which provided an even easier way to collect and share ideas with colleagues from all over the country. Another huge thank you to all the session presenters, roundtable leaders, and note-takers! Notes, handouts, and PowerPoint presentations from these sessions are available in the Members-Only section of the CiVSA website (http://civsa.org/members_only/members-notes.htm) and we're adding more every day.

We toured our host school, American University, and we also visited the University of Maryland-College Park and George Washington University, allowing us to compare three very different schools located only miles from one another. We had some free time to explore the National Mall and museums and the many restaurants of Washington, DC. Our closing dinner was a leisurely cruise up the Potomac River, viewing famous monuments by day and then by night.

As always, the hugest benefit of the conference is the chance to meet amazing people from all over the country. Thank you Betty, Heather, Quinnetta, Sara, Emily, the American University students, and everyone behind the scenes for making it happen!

Jennifer McGowan
University of Michigan



Stephen Barnett from the University of Kentucky accepts the Nick Award. Named for the "Father of CiVSA," Nick Kovalakides (in red shirt), the annual award recognizes an individual who has shown above-and-beyond dedication to CiVSA. (President-Elect Troy Selk hovers in the background).

Following are facilities that the survey's respondents, polled in the spring of 2005, deemed "extremely important" or "very important" when they were selecting a college:

Facilities for major	73.6%
Library	53.6%
Sophisticated technology	50.9%
Classrooms	49.8%
Residence halls	42.2%
Exercise facilities	35.6%
Bookstore	34.6%
Open space	34.4%
Student recreation facilities	32.3%
Science/engineering facilities	29.6%
Dining halls	28.6%
Performing-arts center	21.8%
Student union	21.3%
Visual-arts center	15.3%
Intramural-sports facilities	14.8%
Varsity-athletics facilities	14.2%

SOURCE: Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers

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<http://chronicle.com/>

Section: Money & Management

Volume 52, Issue 40, Page A27



The Welcomer is a quarterly publication of the Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association. Please send comments, suggestions, or photos to:

Jennifer McGowan
Campus Information Center
530 S. State St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1308
734 764-2526 (phone)
mcjen@umich.edu

Have you visited the CIVSA website recently?

There you'll find lots of useful information from the 2006 conference, including session notes and copies of many of the sessions and roundtable discussions. We're also still collecting conference evaluations, so please share your thoughts if you haven't already.

www.civsa.org/

If you don't remember the CIVSA member login and password, contact web@civsa.org

CiVSA Best Practices

Southern Illinois University Carbondale's Individualized Visit

At Southern Illinois University Carbondale, we consider an individualized visit to be a crucial part of our recruitment process. We host individual visits for approximately 3,000 prospective students and their families each year. Each appointment offers some amount of individual attention. Prospective students who schedule their campus visit in advance can choose from an admissions counseling appointment, a campus tour, a housing tour, and meetings with departmental representatives.

The admissions counseling appointment always features thirty minutes of meeting time for each family with an admissions counselor. Outside of travel season, prospective students are assigned to a counselor based on the recruiter's geographic territory. This allows counselors to really connect with prospects from their territory. During travel season, we try to remain well staffed by having four in-house positions. Each counselor has additional duties, such as the visit program, special events, e-mail communications, and associate director. In addition, all traveling staff are required to be in the office on Fridays.

Campus tours are another area in which we provide individualized service. The goal of the visit program is to offer one tour guide for each family. As our ambassador program is still growing, we cannot always do this. But we certainly try. There are typically two to five ambassadors assigned to each tour time, and the tour group is divided among them. We limit our tour capacity to 15 participants per available tour guide. In most cases, however, ambassadors have two to three families on each tour. Once we reach the capacity for the tour time, we close it to additional visitors.

We also offer appointments with departmental representatives. Each department has their own specific format, whether it be a facility tour, individual appointment, group discussion, or college ambassador-led tour. This portion of scheduling takes up the majority of the Front Desk Supervisor's time. Student workers also assist in setting these appointments. Quite a bit of upfront communication took place in order to determine the availability of each department or college, and we constantly work to better our communication with the representatives.

The structure of our Campus Visit Program includes a staff of approximately 5 student workers who report to the Front Desk Supervisor, who in turn reports to the Campus Visit Coordinator. The Campus Visit Coordinator is an in-house counselor, also overseeing the Saluki Ambassador Program and group visits. Having in-house staff to manage the program is an essential part of the success of our program.

Having research to support our success is vital to the continued funding and flexibility necessary to meet the changing needs of our participants. Historically, the administration in our unit has been supportive, or at least hands-off, of our program. We continually strive to improve our program in order to assist in the recruitment efforts of Undergraduate Admissions at Southern.

*Katharine Johnson Suski
Southern Illinois University - Carbondale*

Welcome New Members!

Alexa Bloom
Arizona State University

Maribeth Carskadon
Northern Kentucky University

Bobbie Fuller
George Mason University

Jeff Fuller
University of Houston

Sarah Harper
George Mason University

Alice Hedley
Northern Virginia Community College-
Alexandria

Hugo Morales
Baruch College/City University of New York

Angela Mosley
University of Baltimore

Becky Nemeth
George Mason University

Cindy Parshall
Earlham College

Stacy Rugh
Texas A&M University

Phil Thompson
University of Baltimore

Mike Trask
George Mason University

Membership Renewal

Did you renew your CiVSA membership for one more year when you paid for the conference? If not, don't forget that your yearly membership ended on **July 31**. To continue to receive your fabulous CiVSA benefits including access to the CiVSA website, the e-mail group, and first notification about the CiVSA conference, you must renew your membership immediately.

There are five types of membership available:

Professional Membership (one person) - \$90/year

Institutional Membership (up to three people from the same institution) - \$200/year; plus \$40 for each additional member

Emeritus Membership (members who are officially retired from their institution) - \$40/year

Associate Membership (up to two people from a non-profit organization that is not higher education) - \$150/year

Corporate Membership (up to three people from a for-profit business) - \$350/year

You can visit the CiVSA website to read more details about the various types of membership.

To renew your membership, go to <http://civsa.org/membership/membership-application.php> and fill in all the required fields. You can pay for membership by check or credit card. If you choose credit card, you will be automatically redirected to PayPal (you do not need a PayPal account to pay). If you pay by check, mail your check and the membership application to CiVSA Headquarters:

P.O. Box 971
Clemmons, NC 27012
phone: 336 499-6207
fax: 336 499-3319
e-mail: civsaHQ@civsa.org

CiVSA Officers for 2006-2007

President

Troy Selk
Brigham Young University
801 422-7368
taselk@byu.edu

President-Elect

Tami Tassler
Florida Gulf Coast University
239 590-7989
ttassler@fgcu.edu

Secretary

Betty Spengler
Anne Arundel Community College
410 777-2615
bespengler@aacc.edu

Treasurer

Janey Wheeler
Oklahoma City University
405 208-5345
jwheeler@okcu.edu

Director of Communications

Jennifer McGowan
University of Michigan
734 764-2526
mcjen@umich.edu

Past President

Nancy Franco
Yale University
203 432-2301
nancy.franco@yale.edu

Region 1 Director

Bryan Jue
University of California - Irvine
949 824-2719
bjue@uci.edu

Region 2 Director

Kevin Kirk
Baylor University
254 710-3066
Kevin_Kirk@baylor.edu

Region 3 Director

Stephen Barnett
University of Kentucky
859 257-3107
stephen.barnett@uky.edu

Region 4 Director

Emily Jones
American University
202 885-3042
ejones@american.edu

Have a question for the entire Board?
Reach us all at civsaboard@civsa.org

STUDENT STAFF ISSUES

Survey 2005

Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association

This survey was sent to the membership of CiVSA in October 2005. There were 24 total responses from colleges and universities. Some participants did not elect to answer every question and others offered multiple responses on a single question depending on the complexity of their programs. For this reason, some questions and/or answers have been combined to effectively present the responses collected.

For further information or questions about this survey, please email Janey Wheeler at jwheeler@okcu.edu.

1. Do you depend on students to accomplish your program goals?

100% responded “Yes” with the following areas being represented:

- Campus Visits
- Information Desks / Booths/ Student Information Services
- Visitor/Welcome Centers
- Campus Tours
- University Switchboards / Reception Services / Front Desks
- Student Information Services
- Communications
- Ambassador Programs
- Visitor Services

2. Are your student workers volunteers or are they paid?

The following represents how the funding is handled at different institutions:

- Student workers are paid (23 responses)
- Use volunteers only (1 response)
- Also use volunteers (4 responses)
- Department budget and federal work study funds (8 responses)
- Department budget only (2 responses)
- No information about source of funds (13 responses)

If paid, please elaborate on rate of pay and associated details.

There were 22 out of 24 schools that responded with various pay rates (in some cases for multiple positions). Some schools offer longevity pay while others pay a set rate with no increases.

Hourly Pay Scale for Student Staff (Information and Visitor Services programs)	
4 responses - Use volunteers	1 response - \$ 7.50 with increases
1 response - \$ 5.15	1 response - \$ 7.96 with increases
3 responses - \$ 5.15 with increases	4 responses - \$ 8.00
1 response - \$ 6.10	4 responses - \$ 8.00 with increases
1 response - \$ 6.75	1 response - \$ 8.50
4 responses - \$ 7.00	1 response - \$ 8.60
3 responses - \$ 7.00 with increases	1 response - \$ 9.00
1 responses - \$ 7.25	1 response - \$ 9.05
1 response - \$ 7.25 with increases	1 response - \$ 9.50
1 response - \$ 7.50	1 response - \$12.00

(Survey date - October 2005)

If paid with other forms of compensation (stipends, tuition discounts, clothing, etc), please elaborate.

Out of 24 schools taking the survey, there were 10 who did not respond to this question.

- Foundation scholarship (one tour guide's annual salary)
- Money is good (no other compensation needed)
- Bookstore clothing discount of 40%
- Free clothing (5 responses)
- Free clothing as part of uniform (5 responses)
- \$125 stipend for student officers
- Engraved water bottle
- Guaranteed football tickets
- Incentives, prizes, food coupons through the year
- Rewards from peers and faculty/staff for excellence
- Banquet at end of year
- Incentive plan (25 tours = \$10 certificate to Starbucks)
- Top five with highest points get early class registration

3. Do you have other creative ways of motivating, compensating or rewarding your student workers to stay engaged in your program?

Out of 24 schools taking the survey, there were 3 who did not respond to this question. Similar and/or exact responses have been combined together.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thank you lunches and dinners; pizza parties ▪ Verbal recognition at staff meetings ▪ Lunch with President's wife; high profile dinners ▪ "Thumbs Up" Bulletin board ▪ Employee-of-the-Month (recognition/monetary) ▪ Money works as a motivator for students (2 responses) ▪ Bi-annual retreats (team building, planning, fun) (3 responses) ▪ Bonus \$2.00 hour extra for unpopular shifts ▪ Early registration for student workers (2 responses) ▪ Early move-in to the residence halls (2 responses) ▪ Hire the cream of crop/student leaders ▪ Weekly snack for students as an incentive (2 responses) ▪ Gift certificates for good evaluations; book vouchers ▪ Year end and holiday banquets or dinners (2 responses) ▪ Tour Guide of the Week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weekly "feedback sessions" ▪ New member dinner and orientation ▪ Allow students to do homework on duty ▪ Promote position status to students and campus ▪ Second Mile program ("beyond the call" recognition) ▪ "Student Appreciation Day" during finals (pot luck food) ▪ Team-building activities for tour guides (picnics, mini-golf, laser tag) ▪ Speakers of college/community importance exclusively for tour guides ▪ Exciting / fun events for ambassadors to participate in ▪ Important people to tour (ambassadors, consul generals, visiting VIPs) ▪ Networking with VIP's/attending exclusive events on campus (2 responses)
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4. Have you noticed a specific pattern of turnover or burnout in your student workers?

Reasons for Burnout / Turnover	Suggested Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Get worn down during mid-terms and finals ▪ Seniors and/or over committed students (7 responses) ▪ Students working over two years ▪ Friends outside of work tend to burn out/quit at same time ▪ Busy visit times are the most challenging ▪ Student positions that carry most of the work load ▪ Summertime means less staff (more tours per student) ▪ Students returning from study abroad (culture shock?) ▪ Department depends heavily on the student staff ▪ Use a 2 year maximum to avoid burnout ▪ If pay is good and job is interesting, they will stay (4 responses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Offer "hiatus" program to allow for work breaks (2-6 weeks) ▪ Try to create a very competitive atmosphere for applicants ▪ Allow students some study time at work ▪ Make sure students receive positive visitor feedback ▪ Provide flexibility in student schedules ▪ Select students not over committed ▪ Use other staff (professional and students) in selection process ▪ Have ample professional staff to assist in training/supervision

5. What umbrella is your campus visits AND/OR information services program under and how is your program structured?

Program	Department	Umbrella/Division
Ambassadors/Welcome Center is run by Admissions		Enrollment Services
Campus Information	Enrollment Services	Student Affairs
Campus Information/Visitor Relations	Univ Communications	Advancement
Campus Tours are run by Student Housing		
Campus Visits are run by Admissions (4 responses)		
Campus Visits is run by undergrad admissions/registrar		Enrollment Management
External Relations	University Relations	
Information Boot is run by Office of Public Affairs		
Information Services	Conference/Visitor Services	Student Affairs
New Student Services	Enrollment Management	
Student Information Services	Enrollment Services	Student Affairs
Visitor Center	Public Affairs	External Affairs
Visitor Center	Student Affairs	Provost
Visitor Center/Info Center	Student Comm & Info Svcs	Student Affairs
Visitor Center is its own department		
Visitor Center is run by Admissions		
Visitor Center is run by Office of Conference Housing		Student Affairs
Visitor Center is run by University Advancement		University Relations
Visitor Services	Admissions	
Visitor Services	Enrollment Services	Provost
Welcome Center is run by Public Affairs		Community & Government Relations

7. How many and what type of staff are directly involved in the implementation of your campus visit and/or information services program?

F/T Staff	P/T Staff	Student Staff	Other
0	1	3-5	
0	2	20	
0	4	22	23 volunteers
0	4	65	
1	0	2	60 volunteers
1	0	10	1 grad student
1	0	12	
1	0	15	
1	0	25	
1	0	75	
2	5	5	60 volunteers
2	0	12	
2	0	14	
2	0	14	
2	2	14	15 volunteers
2	0	15	
2	0	21	
2	0	30	
2	16-18	40	
2	2	40	
3	7	5	
3	1	36	
3	0	60	
14	0	12	

The following institutions participated in this survey. Comparison data was collected from the most recent US News & World Report College Guide.

School	Type	Staff completing survey	Undergrad ONLY	Setting	Selectivity
American University (DC)	Private	Sr. Asst Director, Admissions	5,811	Urban	More Selective
Anne Arundel Community College (MD)	Public	Coordinator, Student Information Svcs	No data	No data	No data
California State Polytechnic University (CA)	Public	Director, Visitor & Info Centers	16,955	Suburb	Selective
Colorado State University (CO)	Public	Manager, Visitor Center	21,729	Urban	Selective
Cornell University (NY)	Private	Director, Campus Relations	13,625	Suburb	Most Selective
Florida State University (FL)	Public	Director, Visitor Services	30,373	Urban	More Selective
George Mason University (VA)	Public	Campus Visit Coordinator	17,408	Suburb	Selective
Georgetown University (DC)	Private	Asst Director, Protocol & Events	6,522	Urban	Most Selective
Illinois State University (IL)	Public	Associate Dir, Admissions	17,878	Urban	Selective
Ohio University (OH)	Public	Associate Director, Admissions	16,950	Rural	Selective
Oklahoma City University (OK)	Private	Coordinator, Visitor Services	1,869	Urban	More Selective
Purdue University (IN)	Public	Associate Director, Admissions	30,747	Urban	More Selective
Rice University (TX)	Private	Coordinator, Welcome Center	3,025	Urban	Most Selective
Texas A&M University (TX)	Public	Director, External Relations	35,732	Urban	More Selective
University of Cal –Santa Barbara (CA)	Public	Assistant Director, Admissions	18,121	Suburb	Most Selective
University of California – Irvine (CA)	Public	Coordinator, Campus Tours	19,862	Urban	Most Selective
University of Georgia (GA)	Public	Director, Visitors Center	25,019	Urban	More Selective
University of Idaho (ID)	Public	Mgmt Assistant, New Student Svcs	9,550	Rural	Selective
University of Kentucky (KY)	Public	Assoc Registrar, Community/Outreach	18,434	Urban	More Selective
University of Maryland, College Park (MD)	Public	Mgr, Visitor Svcs & Communications	25,065	Suburb	More Selective
University of Michigan (MI)	Public	Asst Director, Campus Information	24,828	Urban	Most Selective
University of North Carolina (NC)	Public	Director, Visitor Center	16,525	Suburb	Most Selective
University of South Carolina (SC)	Public	Visitor Center	17,689	Urban	More Selective
Yale University (CT)	Private	Assistant Director, Visitor Center	5,319	Urban	Most Selective

National Symposium

Offered by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education

CAS Standards, Self-Assessment, and Student Learning Outcomes in Higher Education

November 12-14, 2006
Hilton Crystal City Hotel, Washington, DC

Keynote Speakers:

Richard P. Keeling, M.D.

*Chief Executive Officer & Executive Consultant
Keeling & Associates, Inc. (K&A)*

Susan Komives, Ed.D.

*Associate Professor of Counseling & Personnel Services
University of Maryland, College Park*

Programs:

- **“CAS Basics”** – introduction to CAS materials & approach
- **Learning sessions**
 - 1) **Connecting Functional Areas to Student Learning Outcomes**
 - 2) **Frameworks for Assessing Learning Development Outcomes:
Setting the Foundation for Imagining the Future**
 - 3) **Preparing for Institutional Accreditation**
 - 4) **Creating a Culture for Assessment**
- **Round table discussions by institution type**
- **Round table discussions by functional area**

Early Registration cost: **\$195** - Limited to the first 300 registered participants

Room cost: **\$169/night**, single or double

For more information contact: Phyllis Mable, CAS Executive Director, (202) 862-1400 or visit <www.cas.edu>