

**2019**  
**Sophomore Survey**  
**Report**

**NAU 2019 SOPHOMORE SURVEY  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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Northern Arizona University has conducted a survey of sophomore students for more than 10 years. The survey assesses student satisfaction and opinions about their experiences at the university. The following report focuses on the results from the spring 2019 administration of the sophomore survey and highlights significant changes over the years of the study.

Consistent with prior years, the 2019 survey respondents are highly satisfied with their overall experience at NAU. Among the areas of greatest satisfaction are success in self-reliance, success in performing academically, and the availability of faculty. Among other highly rated areas are the challenge of academic coursework and student safety. The 2019 student survey reflects improved ratings for the Louie/PeopleSoft registration system and for technology integration into the learning environment compared to the prior year results. With respect to the presence of diverse learning, the 2019 student survey respondents reflect strong support for the statement that instructors encourage students from diverse backgrounds to work together. Further, student survey respondents indicate notable agreement that instructors value individual differences in the classroom.

## METHODS

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The 2019 Sophomore Survey was administered via a web-based application open to all sophomore students. The Office of Institutional Research and Analysis surveyed all students whose academic level was flagged as sophomore (students with 30-59 cumulative units completed) on April 7, 2019<sup>1</sup>. The survey consisted of multiple-choice and open-ended questions in an electronic format. Questions addressed satisfaction in key areas, perceived development of certain essential skills, time management, success in social areas, and opinions about the university environment and services. Questions about NAU advising and support, advising through the Gateway Center, and major department advising, including the advising transition from the Gateway Center, were removed or modified in the 2019 survey. All eligible students were notified of the survey through electronic mail.

The survey was available online for students to respond for a period of four weeks in spring 2019. The sampling error<sup>2</sup> associated with a 632-person sample drawn from a population of 4,882 is  $\pm 3.64\%$ . As expected, the survey sample was similar to the overall population of sophomores on most characteristics examined, except for gender. Appendix A shows the characteristics of the survey sample compared to the sophomore population at NAU at the time the sample was drawn.

A longitudinal comparison of results across all years of the study is only available for select student evaluation areas. The survey instrument underwent a significant revision in 2007, then again in 2011 and 2019. Appendix B summarizes select evaluation results from the 2008-2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 surveys. (The 2013 administration was a shortened version of the complete survey with only selected items asked.)

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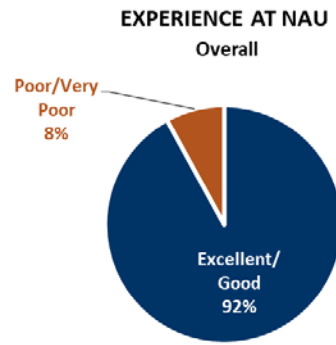
<sup>1</sup> For survey administrations in 2004, 2005, and 2006 the population was based upon sophomore students who had between 40 and 59 total cumulative earned hours and greater than 29 cumulative NAU earned hours. The survey administrations after 2007 mark a slight change in the definition of choosing the sophomore population.

<sup>2</sup> The sampling error describes the probable difference between interviewing everyone in the population versus interviewing a sample drawn from this population. For example, if 80% of the sophomore sample indicated satisfaction in a specific content area, the actual population parameter falls in the range of 76% - 84% (80% +/- 4%) satisfaction.

## KEY RESULTS

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NAU sophomores remain very positive in rating their *overall experience at NAU* to this point in their academic careers. Ninety-three percent (93%) of sophomores surveyed said their experience thus far was either “Good” or “Excellent.” Ninety-five percent (95%) of sophomores *plan on completing their bachelor’s degrees at NAU*, while 79% *would still choose to attend NAU* if they could start over.



	Very Poor	Poor	Good	Excellent
How would you rate your overall experience at NAU so far? (N = 632)	1%	6%	68%	25%
	8	38	428	157

	Definitely No	Probably No	Probably Yes	Definitely Yes
If you could start over, would you choose NAU again? (N = 632)	4%	17%	44%	35%
	28	107	277	220

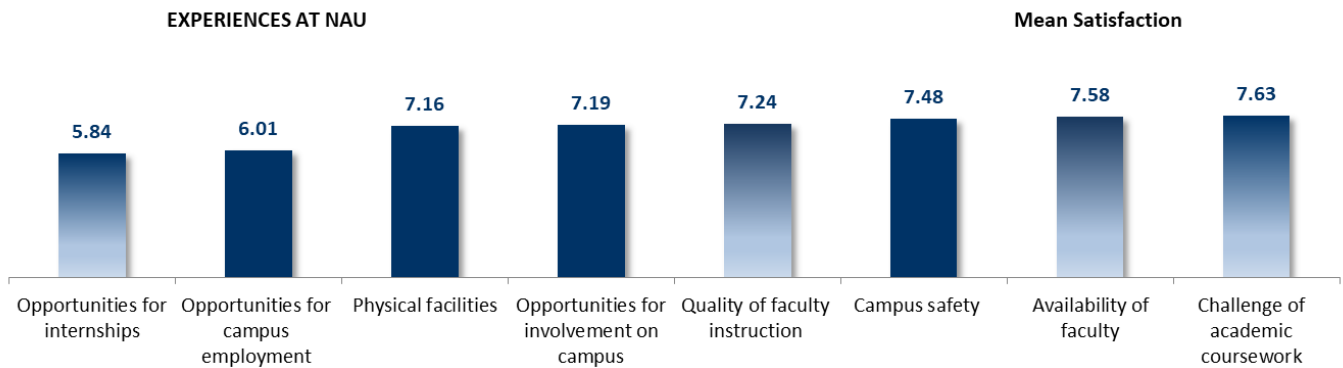
## SUMMARY OF RESPONSES BY CONTENT AREA

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### EXPERIENCES AT NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

Students were asked to rate their satisfaction with eight specific content areas on a scale of 1-10 (1 = “Very Dissatisfied,” 10 = “Very Satisfied”). Greatest satisfaction measured from the four areas of general academics is reported for the *challenge of academic coursework* (7.63), the *availability of faculty* (7.58), followed by the *campus safety* (7.48), and the *quality of faculty instruction* (7.24).

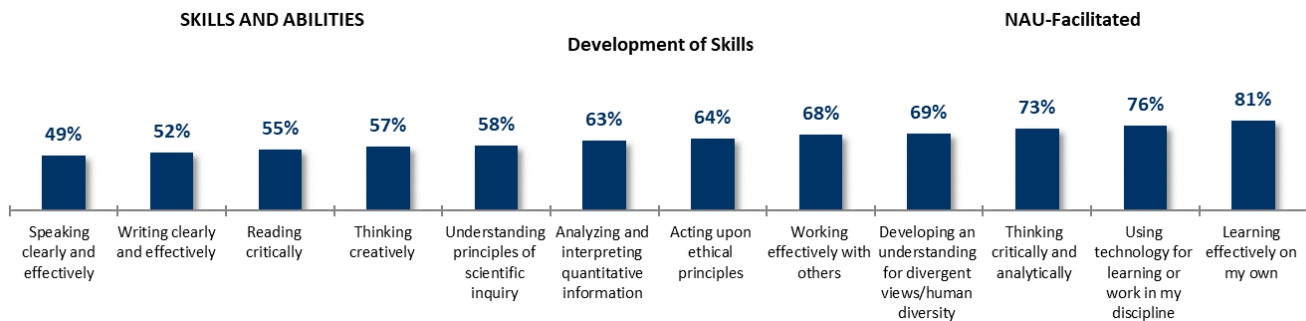
Students were also asked to rate their satisfaction with four additional overall dimensions. The highest satisfaction was reported with *opportunities for involvement on campus* (7.19), followed by *physical facilities* (7.16), *opportunities for campus employment* (6.01), and then *opportunities for internships* (5.84).



## SKILLS AND ABILITIES

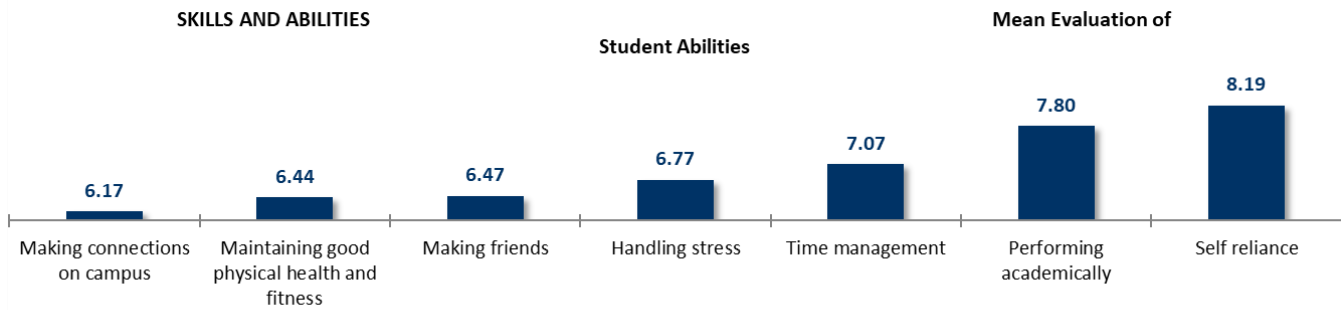
### Skills

Sophomores were asked to evaluate the extent that NAU has facilitated their development in a variety of skill areas. Possible response categories included “Very Little,” “Some,” “Quite a Bit,” and “Very Much”. The proportion of sophomores indicating their NAU education has contributed significantly (“Quite a Bit” or “Very Much” responses) to their development of specific skills varies from a low of 49% for *speaking clearly and effectively* to a high of 81% for *learning effectively on my own*. Please note these are respondents who, on average, have two to three years of courses still to take at NAU. Yet, many of these skill categories are the objectives of the liberal studies curriculum generally taken by first-year and sophomore students.



### Abilities

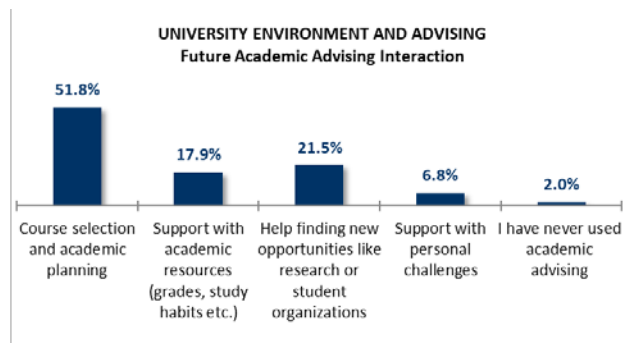
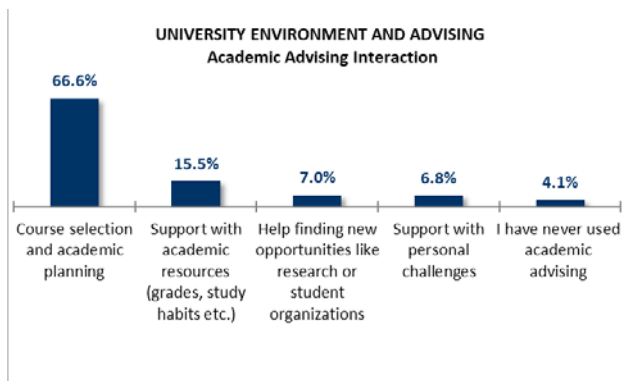
Students were asked to rate how successful they were, on a scale of 1-10, on a variety of abilities indicative of academic success (1 = “Very Unsuccessful,” 10 = “Very Successful”). Students indicated most success in abilities for *self-reliance* (8.19) and *performing academically* (7.80), while *maintaining good physical health and fitness* (6.47) and *making connections on campus* (6.17) were rated the lowest.



## UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT AND ADVISING

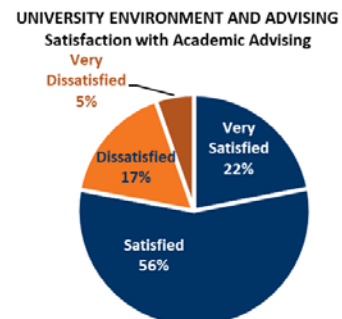
### Academic Advising Interaction

Students were asked to select the types of interaction they have engaged with academic advising and their plan to interact with academic advising. Of the responses, 66.6% of students indicated that they have asked academic advising to help with **course selection and academic planning**, followed by **support with academic resources** (15.5%). In the future, 21.5% of students hope to use academic advising to **help finding new opportunities like research or student organizations** (21.5%).



### Academic Advising Satisfaction

Academic advising had historically been identified as an area in need of improvement on a variety of surveys conducted at NAU over the past several years. In the 2019 administration of the Sophomore Survey, nearly 78% indicated they were “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” with academic advising.



### LOUIE/PeopleSoft

Students rated **NAU's LOUIE/PeopleSoft registration** on a scale of 1-10. Of the respondents, 56% provided a rating from 7-10, and 15% rated the system on the low end (1-3). The remaining students (29%) gave the system an average rating (4-6).

**UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT AND ADVISING**

How would you rate NAU's LOUIE/PeopleSoft class registration system?

<i>Poor</i>										<i>Excellent</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
5%	4%	6%	8%	10%	12%	19%	18%	10%	9%	

**Technology**

When asked **how successful NAU has been in integrating technology into the learning environment** on a scale of 1-10, the majority of the students rated favorably on the high-end of the scale with 69% responding from 7 to 10.

**UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT AND ADVISING**

How successful has NAU been in integrating technology into the learning environment?

<i>Very Unsuccessful</i>										<i>Very Successful</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
2%	1%	4%	4%	9%	12%	24%	20%	13%	12%	

**LIBERAL STUDIES**

Sophomores were surveyed with two questions about the Liberal Studies program. On a scale of 1-5, students were asked **to what extent NAU made them aware of the goals and purpose of the Liberal Studies program**. The responses indicate 38% were aware of the goals and purpose (rating either 4 or 5). When asked **to what extent their learning has benefited from Liberal Studies courses taken so far**, 40% (rating 4 or 5) believed they have benefited from the courses.

**LIBERAL STUDIES**

To what extent has NAU made you aware of the goals and purpose of the Liberal Studies Program?

<i>Not at All</i>					<i>Very Much</i>
1	2	3	4	5	
19%	18%	23%	21%	17%	
Don't know what Liberal Studies are ... 3%					

**LIBERAL STUDIES**

To what extent has your learning benefited from the Liberal Studies courses that you have taken so far?

<i>Have Not Benefited</i>					<i>Highly Benefited</i>
1	2	3	4	5	
13%	18%	26%	24%	16%	
Don't know what Liberal Studies are ... 3%					

**DIVERSE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Sophomore students were asked to rate the presence of diverse learning in seven key areas on a scale of 1-4 (1 = "Strongly Disagree," 4 = "Strongly Agree"). Students that "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" with the diverse-related statements ranged from 89% for **improving my understanding of other countries and cultures is important to me**, 88% for **instructors encourage students from diverse backgrounds to work together**, and 85% for **instructors value individual differences in the classroom**. The following questions were derived from the *2010 Diverse Learning Environments Survey* administered by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA and implemented beginning with the 2011 Sophomore Survey.



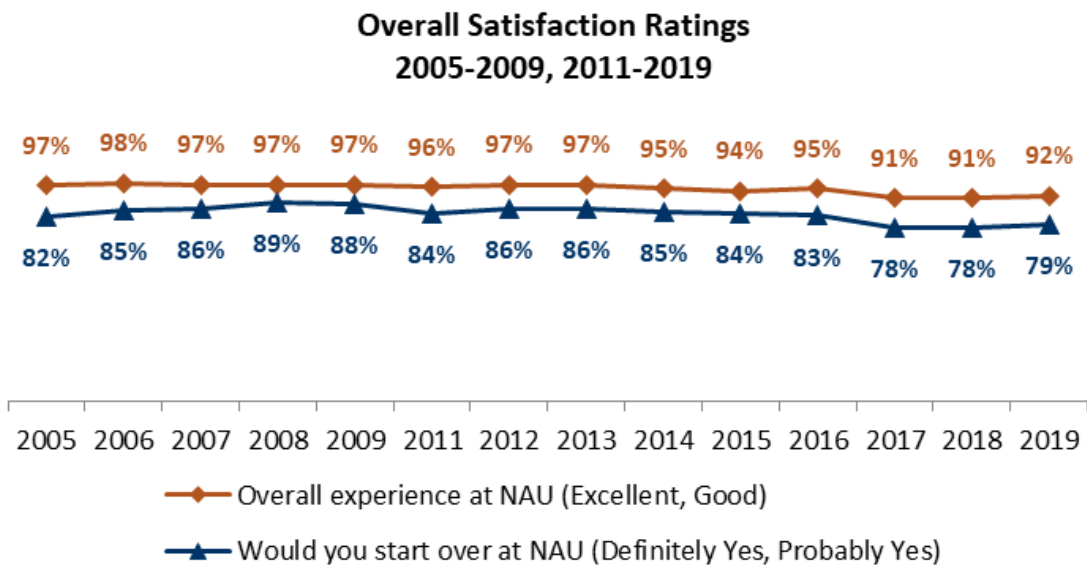
Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Instructors encourage students to contribute different perspectives in class	3%	17%	62%	18%
Improving my understanding of other countries and cultures is important to me	2%	9%	55%	34%
Instructors value individual differences in the classroom	3%	12%	65%	20%
Instructors encourage students from diverse backgrounds to work together	3%	9%	64%	24%
I feel comfortable sharing my own perspective and experiences in class	4%	18%	61%	17%
I often discuss ideas and concepts from class with other students	4%	24%	52%	19%
I am able to explore my own background through class projects	6%	27%	54%	14%

## RESULTS FROM HISTORICAL SURVEYS

The Sophomore Survey underwent major revisions beginning with the 2007 administration, and again in 2011, which prohibit the comparison of all results across all years of the study. However, several questions and answer sets have remained consistent since the first administration of the survey in 2002. The results summarized below provide a comparison for the years of study 2005-2009, 2011-2019.

### OVERALL SATISFACTION RATINGS

Overall satisfaction, assessed by asking students **how they would rate their overall experience at NAU** thus far, has remained consistently high (averaging 92%) across the last fourteen years of this study. In 2019, 79% of students reported they would **“Definitely”** or **“Probably”** start over again at NAU given the opportunity.



### SKILL DEVELOPMENT

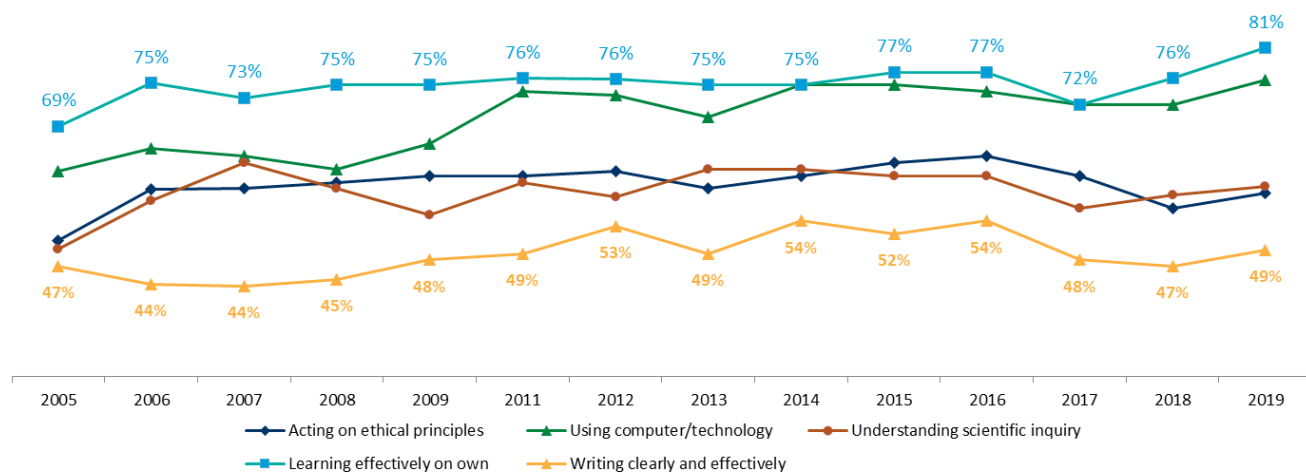
Students are asked to report to what extent NAU has facilitated their development in a variety of key skills (listed below). *Learning effectively on their own* ranked the highest skill development (81%), followed by *Using computer technology* (76%).

### EVALUATION OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AT NAU

Responses “Very Much” or “Quite a Bit”

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Learning effectively on own	69%	75%	73%	75%	75%	76%	76%	75%	75%	77%	77%	72%	76%	81%
Using computer/technology	62%	65%	64%	62%	66%	74%	73%	70%	75%	75%	74%	72%	72%	76%
Thinking critically and analytically	71%	76%	71%	73%	72%	75%	78%	74%	75%	76%	77%	70%	69%	73%
Develop understanding for divergent views	62%	71%	63%	66%	67%	68%	69%	64%	70%	73%	72%	70%	66%	69%
Working effectively with others	62%	70%	67%	70%	71%	68%	68%	64%	66%	67%	70%	66%	66%	68%
Analyzing quantitative problems	56%	61%	60%	60%	59%	66%	68%	66%	66%	70%	68%	61%	62%	63%
Acting on ethical principles	51%	59%	59%	60%	61%	61%	62%	59%	61%	63%	64%	61%	56%	58%
Thinking creatively	60%	65%	63%	64%	62%	64%	67%	63%	63%	66%	65%	57%	54%	57%
Understanding scientific inquiry	50%	57%	63%	59%	55%	60%	58%	62%	62%	61%	61%	56%	58%	59%
Reading critically	56%	67%	61%	59%	62%	61%	64%	60%	61%	63%	65%	56%	54%	55%
Writing clearly and effectively	47%	53%	53%	53%	54%	56%	58%	56%	58%	56%	60%	50%	49%	52%
Speaking clearly and effectively	47%	44%	44%	45%	48%	49%	53%	49%	54%	52%	54%	48%	47%	49%

Comparison of Selected Skills



## APPENDIX A: SAMPLE AND POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

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The 2019 survey sample was similar to the overall population of sophomores on most characteristics examined. As is common in survey research, females are overrepresented as survey respondents.

	Survey Participants	All Sophomores on April 7, 2019
<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>4,882</b>
<b>SAMPLING ERROR</b>		<b>3.64</b>
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	23%	39%
Female	78%	61%
<b>ETHNICITY</b>		
American Indian/Alaska Native	3%	2%
Asian	2%	2%
Black/African American	4%	3%
Hispanic/Latino	23%	25%
Native Hawaiian/Oth Pac Island	<1%	<1%
White	60%	56%
Two or More	5%	6%
International	1%	4%
Not Specified	1%	1%
<b>CUMULATIVE GPA</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>2.98</b>
<b>CAMPUS</b>		
Flagstaff Mountain Campus	95%	93%
Community Campuses	1%	2%
Online <sup>1</sup>	4%	4%

<sup>1</sup> Online includes Personalized Learning effective with the 2019 report

## Appendix B: MEAN VALUE RATING COMPARISONS

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS (based on a scale of 1-10)	2009		2011		2012		2014		2015		2016		2017		2018		2019									
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD						
<b>To this point in your NAU education, how satisfied have you been with each of the following areas?</b>																										
Quality of faculty instruction	7.67	1.8	1,223	7.57	1.8	905	7.53	1.9	880	7.45	2.1	587	7.49	2.0	487	7.46	2.0	547	7.33	2.1	968	6.95	2.2	632	7.24	2.1
Availability of faculty	7.81	1.8	1,206	7.87	1.9	894	7.80	2.0	882	7.80	2.0	588	7.90	2.0	486	7.90	2.0	542	7.80	1.9	961	7.41	2.2	632	7.58	2.1
Challenge of academic coursework	7.99	1.7	1,224	7.91	1.7	894	7.97	1.8	876	7.75	1.9	589	7.92	1.9	485	7.89	1.9	545	7.75	1.9	970	7.57	1.9	632	7.57	1.9
Opportunities for involvement on campus	7.76	1.8	1,130	7.72	2.1	844	7.98	2.0	880	8.03	2.2	590	8.18	2.1	453	7.90	2.2	511	7.52	2.2	911	7.41	2.2	632	7.19	2.3
Opportunities for campus employment <sup>*</sup>	NA	NA	1,036	5.66	2.7	801	5.94	2.8	880	6.96	2.9	588	7.30	2.9	438	6.57	2.8	477	6.27	2.6	854	5.86	2.7	632	6.01	2.6
Campus safety	8.17	1.8	1,154	8.05	1.9	858	8.03	1.9	878	8.18	2.0	590	8.32	1.9	463	7.94	2.0	519	7.22	2.4	940	6.85	2.4	632	7.49	2.2
Physical facilities	7.49	1.9	1,198	6.92	2.3	877	7.67	2.0	881	7.69	2.1	589	7.60	2.1	476	7.60	2.2	529	6.75	2.4	950	7.33	2.2	632	7.16	2.3
Opportunities for internships <sup>*</sup>	NA	NA	857	6.18	2.4	678	6.39	2.4	876	7.42	2.9	586	7.39	2.9	384	6.33	2.6	424	5.92	2.5	776	5.65	2.5	632	5.84	2.4
<b>How successful are you at each of the following?</b>																										
Time management	7.39	2.1	1,231	6.97	2.2	917	7.17	2.2	877	7.12	2.3	589	7.09	2.2	491	7.26	2.2	547	6.98	2.3	881	6.96	2.2	632	7.07	2.1
Handling stress	7.29	2.2	1,232	7.05	2.2	909	7.09	2.2	880	6.96	2.4	588	6.69	2.3	491	6.78	2.4	549	6.39	2.6	884	6.77	2.3	632	6.77	2.2
Making friends	7.56	2.2	1,231	7.23	2.4	908	7.37	2.4	879	6.98	2.5	587	6.94	2.5	490	6.97	2.7	547	6.62	2.6	882	6.40	2.6	632	6.47	2.6
Maintaining good physical health and fitness	7.34	2.1	1,234	7.25	2.2	909	7.37	2.2	879	7.14	2.2	588	6.85	2.4	490	6.95	2.4	548	6.58	2.4	880	6.50	2.3	632	6.44	2.4
Performing academically	8.12	1.7	1,232	7.82	1.9	911	7.88	1.9	879	7.90	2.0	587	7.75	2.0	489	8.02	1.9	547	7.83	2.0	882	7.67	2.0	632	7.80	1.9
self reliance	8.53	1.7	1,231	8.16	2.0	907	8.29	1.9	875	8.19	2.0	588	8.00	2.1	491	8.27	2.0	545	8.15	2.0	885	8.25	1.9	632	8.19	1.8
Making connections on campus	7.13	2.3	1,230	6.82	2.4	905	6.90	2.3	875	6.56	2.5	589	6.63	2.4	490	6.74	2.6	549	6.37	2.5	880	6.15	2.4	632	6.17	2.3
<b>To what extent does NAU emphasize each of the following?</b>																										
Providing the support you need to thrive socially	6.28	2.3	1,229	6.21	2.3	905	6.33	2.4	878	6.20	2.5	588	6.24	2.5	492	6.16	2.6	549	5.66	2.7	854	5.01	2.5	NA**	NA**	NA**
Providing the support you need to help you succeed academically	7.50	2.1	1,229	7.32	2.1	903	7.46	2.1	879	7.44	2.1	590	7.45	2.1	491	7.34	2.2	546	6.84	2.5	854	6.75	2.3	NA**	NA**	NA**
Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	5.40	2.6	1,229	5.38	2.6	905	5.59	2.6	878	5.44	2.7	590	5.53	2.6	491	5.46	2.8	549	5.07	2.8	854	4.60	2.6	NA**	NA**	NA**
<b>To what extent has the Gateway Center helped you:</b>																										
Explore potential majors	5.50	3.0	980	5.56	2.9	709	5.71	3.0	725	5.52	3.1	492	5.43	3.0	421	5.76	3.0	456	5.33	3.1	822	4.72	3.0	NA**	NA**	NA**
Understand degree or major requirements	7.10	2.6	982	6.85	2.8	709	6.98	2.7	725	6.89	2.8	493	6.82	2.8	422	7.07	2.6	455	6.57	2.8	821	5.87	3.1	NA**	NA**	NA**
Learn to select appropriate courses	6.78	2.7	982	6.51	2.8	712	6.71	2.8	726	6.79	2.8	493	6.71	2.8	422	6.90	2.8	455	6.56	2.8	820	5.87	3.1	NA**	NA**	NA**
Become a successful student	5.84	2.7	981	5.65	2.8	708	5.91	2.8	728	5.74	2.9	493	5.83	2.8	421	6.09	2.9	456	5.53	2.9	819	5.24	3.0	NA**	NA**	NA**
Define your career goals	5.33	2.9	982	5.40	2.8	708	5.63	2.9	725	5.42	3.0	492	5.40	2.9	420	5.69	3.0	452	5.11	3.0	822	4.63	2.9	NA**	NA**	NA**
<b>How would you describe the advising transition when you were transferred from the Gateway to your college for advising?*</b>	NA	NA	878	7.54	2.6	606	7.46	2.6	568	7.36	2.7	385	7.23	2.7	293	7.33	2.7	314	6.99	2.8	792	5.54	3.1	NA**	NA**	NA**
<b>To what extent has your major department advising:</b>																										
Helped you be a successful student	7.17	2.5	1,090	6.91	2.7	780	6.90	2.6	696	6.61	2.9	464	6.75	2.8	345	6.53	2.8	389	6.58	2.9	778	5.60	3.0	NA**	NA**	NA**
Provided you with information about research opportunities or internship experiences	6.09	3.1	1,092	6.09	3.0	780	6.07	3.0	696	5.80	3.2	464	5.94	3.1	348	5.63	3.3	390	5.58	3.2	779	5.05	3.1	NA**	NA**	NA**
Talked to you about career options	6.28	3.0	1,093	6.23	3.0	778	6.19	3.0	694	5.87	3.1	466	5.95	3.1	347	5.65	3.2	388	5.58	3.3	776	5.07	3.2	NA**	NA**	NA**
<b>How would you rate NAU's Louie/PeopleSoft registration system?</b>	7.47	2.0	1,224	6.68	2.4	908	6.67	2.3	877	6.70	2.3	589	6.72	2.3	491	6.77	2.3	550	6.44	2.4	806	5.74	2.7	632	6.34	2.5
<b>How successful has NAU been in integrating technology into the learning environment?</b>	7.63	1.8	1,232	7.26	2.0	907	7.18	2.0	874	7.03	2.1	590	7.10	2.1	492	7.18	2.1	548	6.87	2.3	808	6.55	2.2	632	7.06	2.0

\* New questions implemented in the 2011 survey instrument.

\*\* Questions removed or modified in the 2019 survey instrument