Every year, international students across the globe are asked to fill out the International Student Barometer (ISB). The survey, administered at 178 institutions in 13 countries in 2013, asks students to rank their satisfaction with a variety of categories related to their arrival, learning, living, support, challenges, and choice of institution.

In an effort to better understand the international student experience, the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities participated in this survey for the first time in fall 2013. To see how the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities compares, UMN-TC results are presented in comparison to the overall responses in the United States and a smaller “peer group” consisting of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Kansas, University of Pittsburgh, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, University of Cincinnati, University of Missouri, and Northwestern University.

UMN-TC colleges or units may see results specific to their students upon request. If you have any questions or wish to see college/unit-level data, contact Xi Yu (yuxxx637@umn.edu) in the International Student & Scholar Services office.
## ARRIVAL: Successful, but schedule and registration process cause concern

**% Satisfied Overall:** 92.7% (+2.6% U.S./+1.9% Peer*)

### Satisfactory Items
- 98.4% found “One Stop Student Services” satisfactory for providing information when they arrived (+3.3% U.S. and Peer)
- 91.0% were satisfied with the Social Activities offered upon arrival (+4.9% U.S./+4.0% Peer)

### Items of Concern
- Only 80.2% of students expressed satisfaction with the registration process (-1.8% U.S./-1.3% Peer)

“Most international students couldn’t register for the classes they wanted because we have to finish the orientation first. But the orientation is too late. Most classes were full.”

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## SUPPORT: Many resources available

**% Satisfied Overall:** 91.6% (+0.9% U.S./+0.5% Peer)

### Satisfactory Items
- 97.7% said they were satisfied with Coffman Union (+2.4% U.S./+0.2% Peer)
- 94.5% expressed satisfaction with Boyton Health Services (+3.6 U.S./+2.1% Peer)

“One Stop Student Services have been very helpful in giving information and responding to queries in a timely fashion…”

“Boyton Health Service is really good, but it will be great if they give more effort to let students know about those awesome services that they have covered by health insurance!”

“The Writing Center is awesome! Really helpful! More people should talk about it!! … Appointments for writing centers are always two or three weeks from the date I need them…”

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## LEARNING: Strong academic infrastructure, but greater teacher interaction and employment assistance sought

**% Satisfied Overall:** 87.5% (-2.2% U.S./-3.5% Peer)

### Satisfactory Items
- 94.3% found their access to Online library resources, such as journals, satisfactory (+2.5% U.S./+1.9 Peer)
- 94.2% were satisfied with the learning technology available (+2.3% U.S./+1.4% Peer)

### Items of Concern
- Only 83.6% expressed satisfaction with the size of their classes (-6.9% U.S./-3.4% Peer)
- Only 76.7% expressed satisfaction when asked about the advice and guidance given by academic staff regarding long-term job opportunities and careers (-2.2% U.S./-5.5% Peer)
- Only 72% expressed satisfaction with the opportunities for work experience or placements as a part of their studies (-1.1% U.S./-2.6% Peer)

“I think that professors in U of M are very friendly and open to all the students, including international ones. It helps me to succeed academically.”

“The learning experience is well. But we do need more help from instructors, especially the assistants from writing and communication courses.”

“I hoped there would be more working/internship opportunities associated with my program…”

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## LIVING: Supportive environment, but expensive and more meaningful interactions with domestic students wanted

**% Satisfied Overall:** 87.4% (+0.3% U.S./-1.6% Peer)

### Satisfactory Items
- 94.3% found the University’s eco-friendly attitude satisfactory (+5.0% U.S./+3.8% Peer)
- 93.4% were satisfied with the sports facilities available (+4.4% U.S./+0.3% Peer)
- 90.2% expressed satisfaction with the university’s residence services (+4.6% U.S./+1.0% Peer)
- 87.1% were satisfied with the social activities and organized events available to them (+3.1% U.S./+2.7% Peer)

Items of Concern
- Only 70.4% expressed satisfaction with how safe and secure they felt (-14.8% U.S./-12.3% Peer)
- Only 63.9% believe the cost of housing is acceptable (+1.5% U.S./+1.1% Peer)
- Only 75% expressed satisfaction with “making friendships with American students” (-4.1% U.S./-2.7% Peer)

“I would like] more connection and more events for getting to know the people who live around me. Maybe the academic work is too busy this semester, or maybe it is because I am a new transfer student, but I did not have many chances to meet the students who have been studying here.”

“The university is getting really unsafe these days. I feel really nervous every time I am walking back home after dark. Something needs to be done ASAP to make the campus a more secure place for the students.”

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* Comparisons to U.S. and peer group are given as percentage that the University of MN is plus or minus compared to the group.
### What do you like most about being an international student at the U of M?

“
What I like the most is the motivational character of some of my instructors who are trying to help me be more involved in the social life. I also admire the curious look of some of the people surrounding me who seem to be eager to know more about me.”

“This is great chance for me to experience a different culture without the culture gap. The U is a real global-level university.”

“Being an international student was not my active choice. I chose to be a student. But, the trainings that I have gained in the U of M have helped me to realize my strength and weakness as a learner. I doubt that I would see my weakness so clearly if I trained in my native country, or that I would have made the same efforts to overcome my weakness. My experiences as an international student at the U have been crucial to teaching me the true meanings of self-motivation and to make an effort. If I became a better international student, who dares to dream to be an international scholar, it is because of all the support from my mentors, department, and programs at the U.”

### What are your biggest challenges right now as an international student?

“
In my first and second semester, it was difficult to communicate with American students. They usually did the assignments/study for exams in groups, and I had no idea that they are doing it or was never invited to join. After that I learned to initiate myself and found a way to be part of their groups...”

### To what extent do you agree that the campus community values your viewpoints and the perspectives you bring to the classroom?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Would you recommend the University of Minnesota to others thinking of applying?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actively discourage</th>
<th>Neither encourage nor discourage</th>
<th>Actively encourage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourage if asked</th>
<th>Encourage if asked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### How often do you interact with American students in the classroom?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>43.6%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### How often do you interact with American students outside of the classroom?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ISB Response Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Overall Population</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>2,527</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>20,387</td>
<td>67,306</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>143,952</td>
<td>532,228</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### All Respondents by Country

- China: 36%
- India: 12%
- South Korea: 11%
- Vietnam: 3%
- Others: 38%

### All Respondents by College/School

- CSE: 34%
- CLA: 24%
- Carlson: 9%
- CEHD: 6%
- CFANS: 6%
- Other Schools: 21%
- Other Schools: 21%

### All Respondents by Academic Level

- Undergraduate: 40%
- Master / Professional: 25%
- Doctorate: 32%
- Non-Degree: 3%

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The International Student Barometer was developed by i-graduate. The data was co-analyzed by i-graduate and the University of Minnesota’s International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) office. The project is funded by fees from Undergraduate Education (“Academic Services Fee”) and ISSS.