
Maximizing Survey Results

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Surveys

- Two types:
 - Data collection (factual data)
 - Opinion (the focus of this presentation)

Existing data

- Leverage existing data before running your own survey
- Stand alone survey versus supplemental questions on existing survey



Benefits of web surveys

- Authentication
- Cost
- Ease of use
- Qualitative comments
- Timing
- Ability to merge in other data



Examples of questions

- Closed ended
 - *Overall, how satisfied have you been with your undergraduate education? (scale: Very dissatisfied; Generally dissatisfied; Ambivalent; Generally satisfied; Very satisfied)*
- Open ended
 - *Which aspect of your graduate/professional program pleased you the most?*

Questionable questions

- How satisfied are you with the pace/pressure at the Institute?
- What is the average daily roundtrip cost of your commute to MIT?
- Comment on what your school could have done to improve your undergraduate experience or what you wish you had done differently, or both.



Guidelines for questions

- Be precise
- Avoid double-barreled questions
- Make sure response categories are mutually exclusive
- Use time-frames
- Minimize bias (loaded questions)
- N/As, Don't knows, Neutral, and Other



2. Create profile

- Determine survey sample
- Gather/merge lists
- Demographics



3. Provide incentives

- Define incentives and criteria for reward system
- Sample incentives
 - Movie tickets
 - TechCash
 - Grand prizes



4. Launch survey

- Program web survey with information provided, including authentication, incentives, etc.
- Timing of launch

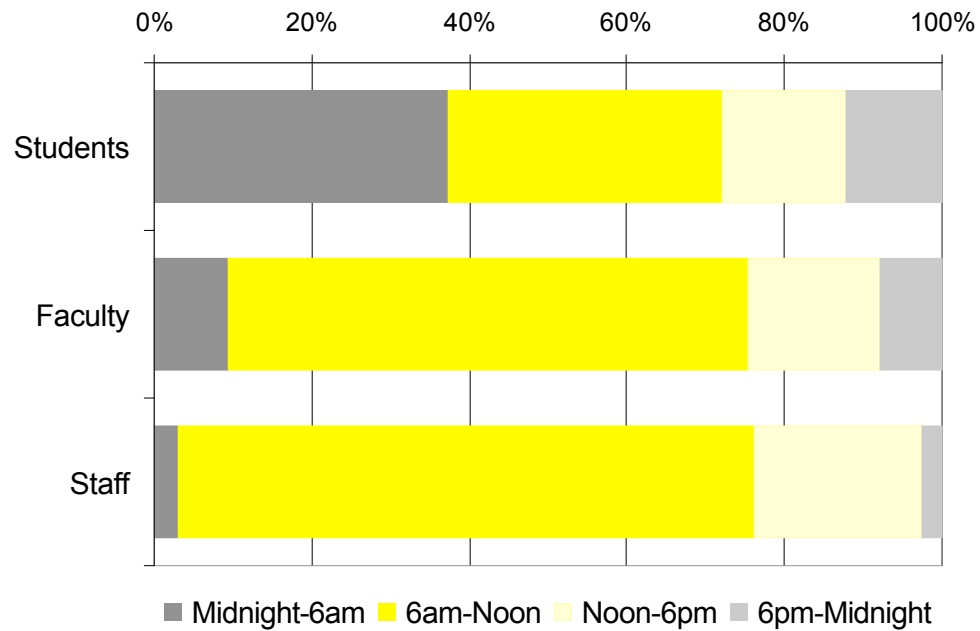
5. Invite and remind

- Send bulk email invitations
- Remind non-responders
- Timing of reminders
- Response rates



Response patterns

% of Total Responses by Group and Time of Day
2006 Transportation Survey



6. Post-process

- Clean up and merge data
- Process rewards
- Remove identifiers
- Send data to researcher for analysis



7. Analyze

- Enter the world of numbers, charts, graphs, and reports
- Data is data, good or bad
- Descriptive, not causal
- Examples
 - Frequency
 - Crosstab
 - Trend
 - Peer



Frequency

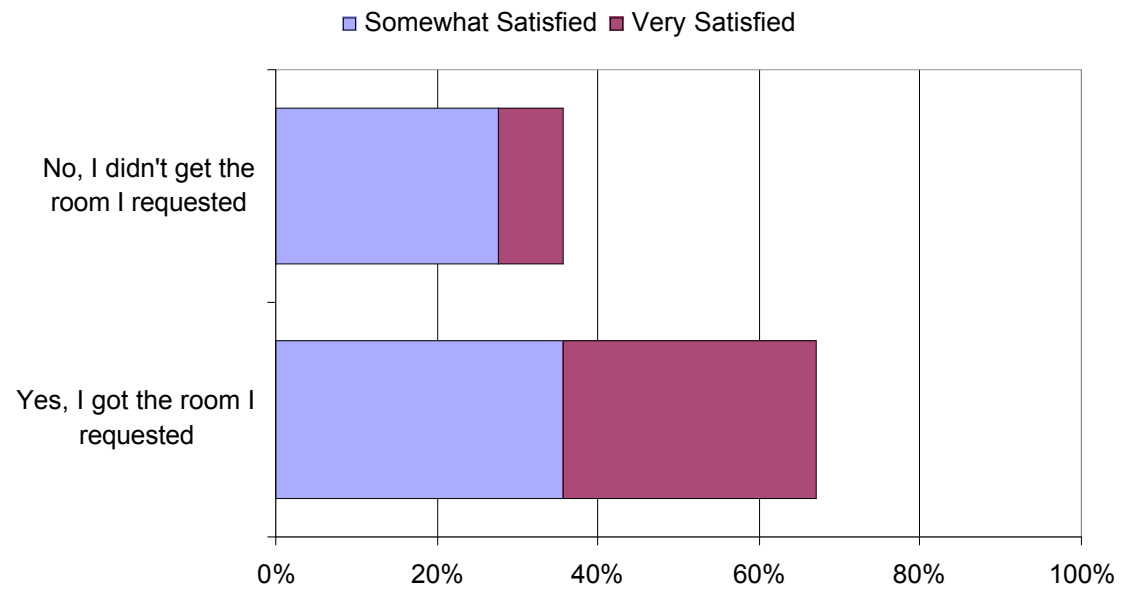
- What were you doing immediately prior to entering this program? (*2006 Incoming Graduate Student Survey*)

	Count	Percent
Undergraduate student	371	37.3%
Graduate student	132	13.3%
Volunteer/community service	8	0.8%
Cared for a family	6	0.6%
Employed in a field related to that of current study	356	35.8%
Employed in a field unrelated to that of current study	99	10.0%
Other (please specify)	22	2.2%
Overall	994	100.0%



Crosstab

Satisfaction with Classroom
by whether faculty got room requested

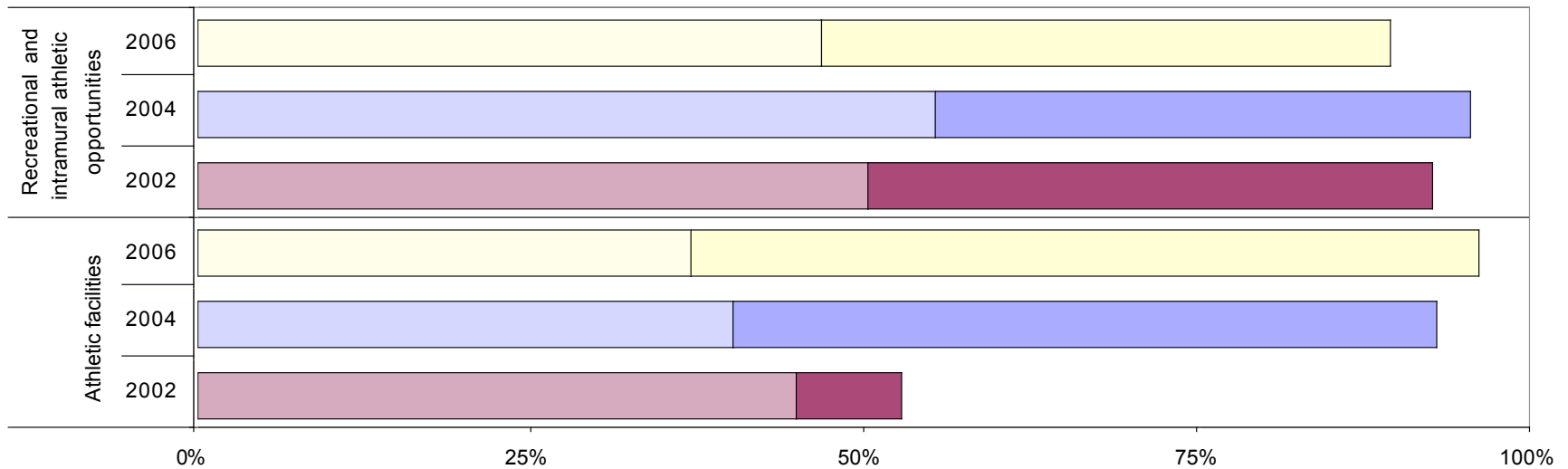


Source: 2004-05 Classroom Survey



Trend

Satisfaction with Athletics
(Generally Satisfied & Very Satisfied)

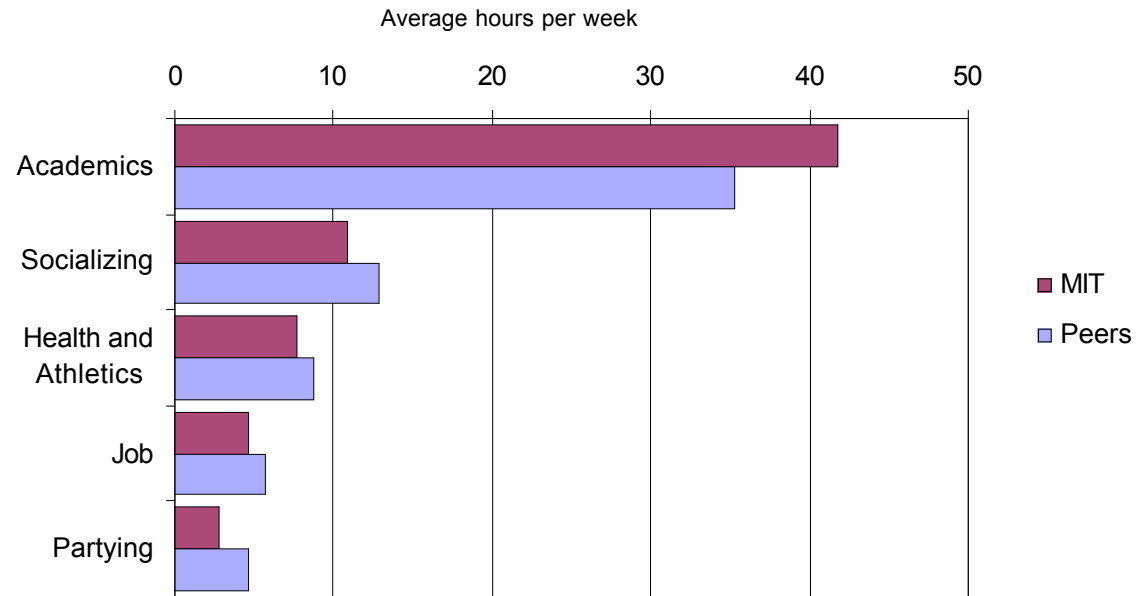


Source: Senior Survey (2002, 2004, 2006)



Peer

How much time students spend on various activities



Source: 2003 Enrolled Student Survey



8. Archive

- Save survey, codebook, invitation/reminder text, raw data, syntax, and reports



Lessons learned

- Plan, Plan, Plan
- Test, Test, Test
- Be realistic

