

SpotLight 2002 was distributed by Department of Residence Life Staff to all residents of undergraduate residence halls in October, 2002. Surveys were completed by 8356 students. The SpotLight survey is the only full population survey the department conducts. Its purpose is to provide the department and the university with current information about our students. Basic survey questions focus on the floor environment, the mentor and hall activities. Especially important assessment interests include the types of learning behaviors students engage in; the developmental process of forming and/or reforming personal values; gaining citizenship skills, broadening their appreciation and competency for living and working in multicultural environments and managing their personal lives in order to maintain health and well-being.

ALL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN HALLS (N=14,215)		
SPOTLIGHT RESPONDENTS 2002 (TOTAL N=8356; WITH PIDS=5935)		
	MSU Under-grads	Spot-Light 2002
RACE/ETHNICITY		
White-Non-Hispanic	75%	71%
Black/AA/Non-Hispanic	12%	10%
Chicano/Latino/Hispanic	3%	2%
American Indian	1%	1%
Asian Pacific American	7%	5%
All Others	3%	10%
CLASS LEVEL		
Freshmen	55%	63%
Sophomores	28%	26%
Juniors	11%	8%
Seniors	6%	3%
All Others	1%	0%
GENDER		
Male	45%	40%
Female	55%	59%
Transgender		1%
CITIZENSHIP		
US Citizen	95%	97%
Non-US Citizen	3%	2%
Permanent Resident	2%	2%
RELIGION		
Christian		81%
Jewish		4%
Muslim		1%
Hindu		2%
Other		13%
SEXUAL ORIENTATION		
Prefer Not to Say		4%
Heterosexual		93%
Gay or Lesbian		1%
Bisexual		1%

The Survey Population

As reflected in the chart to the left, the survey respondents were fairly representative of the overall undergraduate residence hall student population. Non-Christians, non-whites, and men responded at a somewhat lower degree than their demographic cohorts; while freshmen participated at a higher degree. Most of the responses from those supplying PIDs (74%) were more positive than from those who did not. Students not giving their PIDs were more critical of floor Mentors, had observed more floor residents drinking “too much” and were more likely to report being treated disrespectfully because of their background. They also reported a greater understanding of their cultural background.

Survey results for the 2000, 2001 and 2002 SpotLights were compared. Significant differences were found on all items except one, “I have felt overwhelmed with all I have had to do.” The responses from year to year follow the same general response trends. Overall 2002 responses were more positive than those from 2001. Responses for 2001 were generally lower than those from 2000. For the graphs which follow, all questions from the 2002 SpotLight are reported. Missing information for other years means that there was no comparable question. It is important to note that the October SpotLight for 2001 was administered one month after the 9-11 terrorist attacks on the United States.

Graphs contained in the following pages report levels of agreement for the common questions from surveys for the past three years.

Learning

In 2002 76% of all undergraduate survey respondents expected to get a 3.0 for fall semester. They engaged with other students about learning, with more than eight of ten reporting they had helped others with their academic work (84%), and had talked with other students about what they were learning in their classes (88%). Almost eight in ten reported keeping up to date on classes and assignments (79%). Conversations with faculty outside of the classroom were more commonly about academic topics (58%), than non-academic topics (43%).

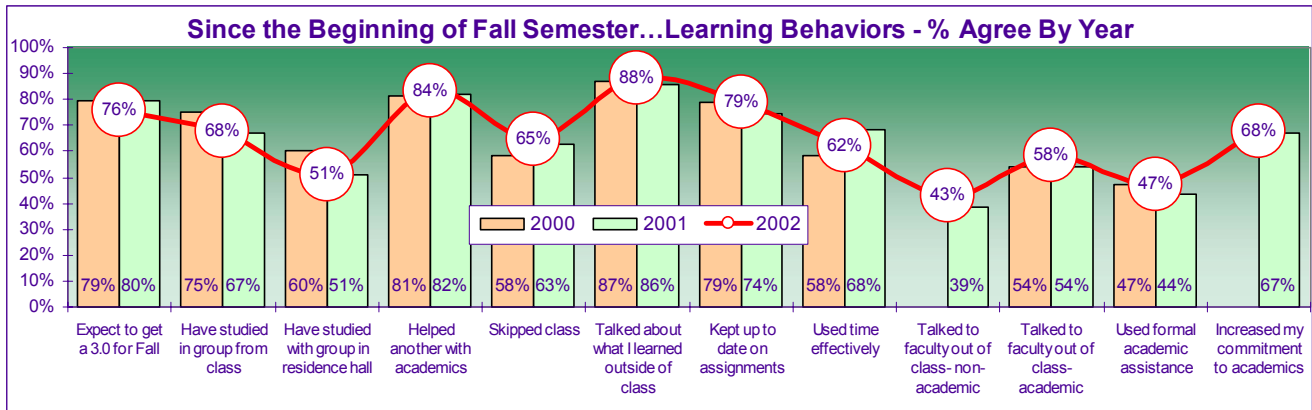
Two-thirds of all respondents had skipped a class, and almost half had sought academic assistance from a university office. Less than two thirds reported using their time effectively (62%).

Integrated Learning– Differences by Class

Note: Data by class is reported for only those who provided PIDs. Therefore there will be a difference between totals for the entire response group, and the totals for class levels. For all charts highlighting responses by class level, the 2421 surveys submitted without PIDs are not included. Surveys with PIDs (5931) included 3721 freshmen, 1539 sophomores, 453 juniors, and 197 seniors.

Freshmen reported the lowest level of contact with faculty outside of the classroom, on academic or non-academic topics. They were more likely to study with other students in the hall and had the lowest expectation of the four undergraduate classes that they would get

at least a 3.0 for fall semester. Helping others with academics, keeping up to date on assignments, and utilizing resources for academic assistance were consistent for the four groups.

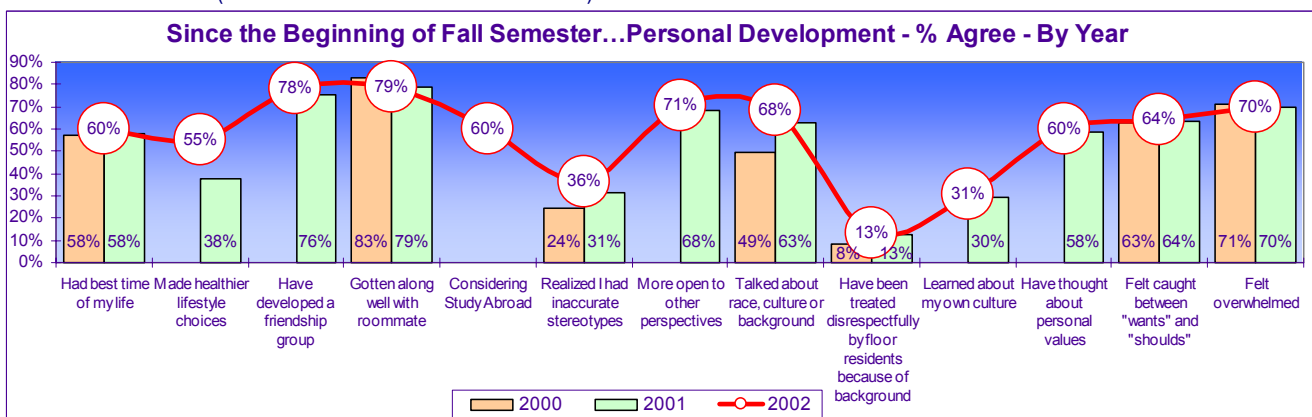


Variable	Fresh.	Soph.	Jun.	Sen.	All Undergrads
This semester I expect to get a 3.0 or higher	73%	80%	81%	85%	76%
I have studied in a group with students from one of my classes	69%	70%	66%	69%	69%
I have studied in a group with students who live in my residence hall	54%	49%	36%	30%	51%
I have helped another student with their academic work	85%	85%	86%	87%	85%
I have skipped class	65%	67%	68%	65%	66%
I have talked to another student about something I learned in a class	89%	90%	93%	91%	90%
I have kept up-to-date with my classes and assignments	80%	79%	80%	81%	79%
I have used my time effectively	61%	65%	66%	68%	63%
I have had an out-of-class conversation w/faculty member (non-academic)	39%	45%	54%	62%	41%
I have had an out-of-class conversation w/faculty member (academic work)	56%	61%	63%	75%	58%
I have gone to a university office and received academic help	46%	47%	47%	48%	47%
I have gained a greater commitment to my academic goals	69%	67%	69%	62%	68%

Personal Development

Students have made significant changes in a number of developmental areas, especially on items related to gaining multicultural competency. Students had higher scores in 2002 on realizing their inaccurate stereotypes (36%); learning about their own culture (31%); talking to others about race, culture or background (68%); and increasing their openness to different perspectives (71%). Sixty percent of all respondents reported seriously thinking about study abroad.

The exploration of personal values remained a common activity, with students reporting that they felt caught between doing what they wanted to do, and what they thought they should do (64%), and in making decisions which challenged them to think about their personal values (60%) - both increased from 2001. Students reported a high degree of success in making interpersonal connections. Consistent from 2001 to 2002, students reported having positive relationships with their roommates (79% both years), and in finding a meaningful friendship group (78%). In 2002, students reported a much greater degree of success in making healthier life-style choices (55%), up from 38% in 2001. A greater percentage of students thought about leaving MSU in 2002 (26%), yet 60% agreed that they had had the best time of their lives (an increase from both 2000 and 2001).



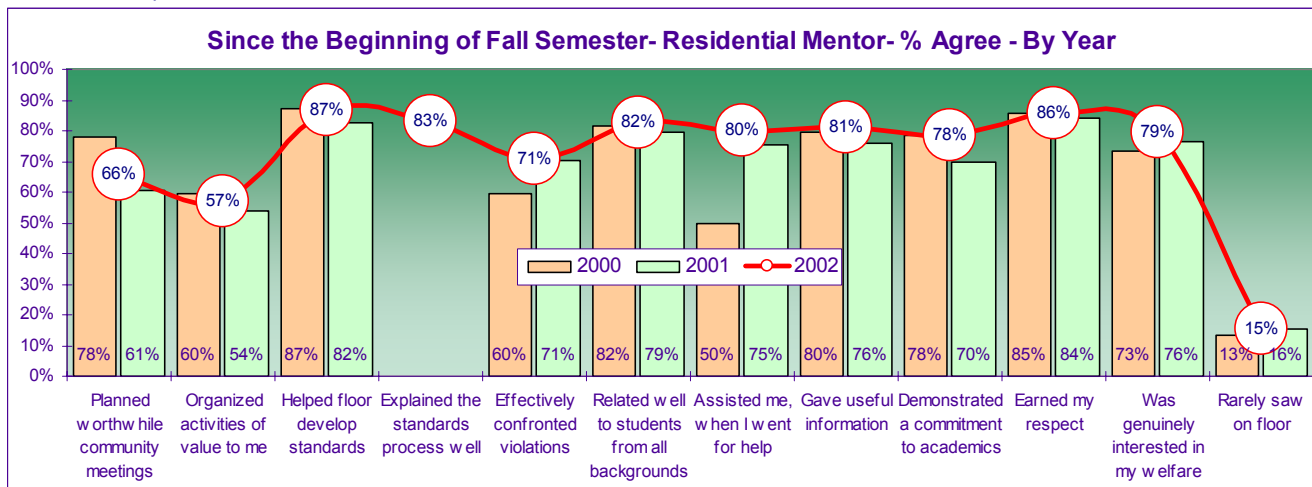
Personal Development - Differences by Class

Seventy-two percent of the freshmen reported more openness to perspectives different from their own, but somewhat fewer (65%) stated they had talked with other students about culture, race and religion. Twelve percent of the freshmen had experienced disrespect from other floor residents because of their background, a slightly higher level than the other class levels. More freshmen had considered leaving MSU during the semester (27%). Sophomores felt the most overwhelmed about all they had to do (75%). They also reported the highest agreement to the statement "I have had the best time of my life" (65%). There were no clear trends in this varied area of questions. Personal development skills do not seem to correlate clearly with increasing class level.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT VARIABLES- PERCENT AGREE BY CLASS	Fresh.	Soph.	Jun.	Sen.	All Undergrads
<i>Significantly different items (p<.05) are shaded in green- highest score in orange</i>					
I have had the best time of my life	61%	65%	55%	55%	61%
I have learned to make healthier life-style choices	55%	56%	59%	50%	55%
I have developed a friendship group which is meaningful for me	78%	82%	81%	76%	79%
My roommate and I have gotten along well (Leave blank no roommate).	79%	82%	81%	76%	80%
I have seriously considered studying abroad while at MSU (leave blank if went already)	61%	63%	55%	46%	61%
I have realized that I had some inaccurate stereotypes about people different from myself	36%	37%	33%	33%	36%
I have increased my openness to considering perspectives different from my own	72%	71%	70%	67%	71%
I have talked with other students about issues related to culture, race or religion	65%	72%	79%	75%	68%
I have been treated disrespectfully because of my background (race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion) by other floor residents	12%	11%	11%	10%	11%
I have developed a greater understanding of my cultural background	29%	29%	31%	20%	29%
I have made decisions which have challenged me to think about my personal values	61%	61%	59%	64%	61%
I have felt caught between what I wanted to do, and what I thought I should do	64%	66%	67%	66%	65%
I have felt overwhelmed by all I had to do	69%	75%	72%	71%	71%
I have considered packing up and leaving MSU	27%	24%	22%	21%	25%

Mentor

An important element of the residential environment is the placement of a peer leader within every community. Mentors are generally upperclassmen who have demonstrated the ability to be leaders, and academically and personally successful role models. The GPA for current Mentors is 3.2. On every item pertaining to the Resident Mentor role, respondents in 2002 were more positive than 2001 respondents, except on one item, "I have rarely seen the Mentor on my floor." Mentor role variables which received at least 80% agreement included providing useful information, giving assistance when approached, assisting the floor in developing standards, explaining the standards process, and relating well to students from all backgrounds. Eighty-six percent reported that their Mentor had earned their respect.



Differences by Class

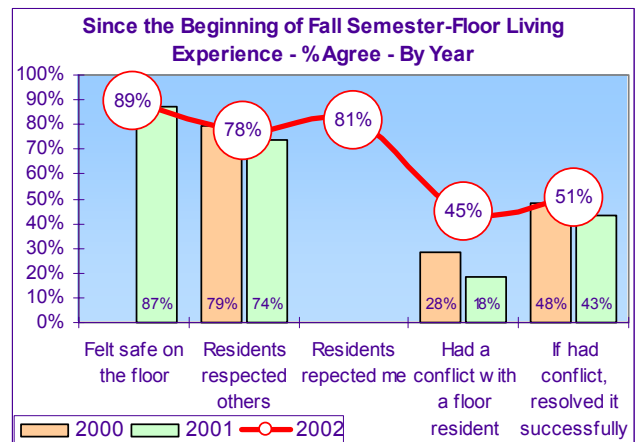
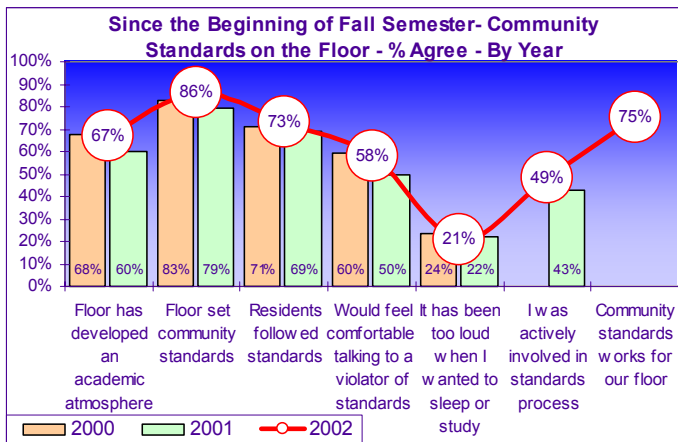
On all but one of the Mentor-related items, the first-year students rated the Mentor more positively. This general trend continued through the senior level, as seniors generally rated the Mentor variables lowest of the four classes.

RESIDENTIAL MENTOR VARIABLES- PERCENT AGREE BY CLASS	Fresh.	Soph.	Jun.	Sen.	All Undergrads
<i>Significantly different items (p<.05) are shaded in green- highest score in orange</i>					
My Mentor has planned community meetings which residents find worthwhile	67%	68%	65%	63%	67%
My Mentor has organized activities which have been valuable to me	58%	57%	54%	51%	57%
My Mentor has helped our floor develop Community Standards	89%	87%	85%	82%	88%
My Mentor has explained the Community Standards process well	86%	83%	79%	76%	84%
I have seen my Mentor effectively confront policy violations (skip if no violations)	74%	71%	64%	70%	72%

I have seen my Mentor relate well to students from various backgrounds, ethnicities, and lifestyles	85%	82%	80%	79%	84%
I have gone to my Mentor for assistance, and was satisfied with the response (leave blank if you haven't gone to your Mentor)	84%	78%	81%	75%	82%
I have received useful information from my Mentor	85%	80%	78%	70%	83%
My Mentor has shown a serious commitment to academics	81%	78%	77%	75%	80%
My Mentor has acted in a manner which has earned my respect	88%	87%	84%	87%	88%
My Mentor has demonstrated a genuine interest in my welfare	82%	81%	78%	76%	81%
I have rarely seen my Mentor on the floor	13%	14%	14%	17%	14%

Floor and Hall

The majority of items in this area were rated more positively in 2002. In 2000 the Community Standards process was initiated, which involves residents establishing and maintaining self-determined standards for common behaviors on the floors. (Mentors continue to enforce university policy and health and safety regulations). A number of questions about the floor environment were directed toward an assessment of the Community Standards process. Overall, 75% of the students agreed that Community Standards "worked" for their floor, and 71% reported that floor members generally followed the standards which were set. Though 86% stated that Community Standards had been set on the floor, less than half (49%) had actively participated in the standards process. Twenty percent stated that it was too loud on the floor when they wanted to sleep or study and only 65% felt that their floor had developed an environment supportive of academics. Almost nine of ten students felt safe on their floor community and believed that the rules about residence hall living were reasonable. Eighty three percent felt respected by other floor members, even though considerably less (56%) felt like valued members of the floor.



Floor and Hall Environment- Differences by Class

Freshmen students felt that the standards process worked on their floors to a higher degree than students from the other class levels. They also reported the greatest degree of agreement that the rules related to hall living were reasonable. Hall group activities were more highly rated by freshmen and sophomores (45%), while juniors and seniors were less positive (36%). Forty-six percent of freshmen had a conflict with another resident, and 52% of those who had a conflict, resolved it successfully. Though the students from the other class levels reported fewer conflicts, they were less successful than the freshmen in resolving them.

FLOOR ENVIRONMENT VARIABLES- PERCENT AGREE BY CLASS	Fresh.	Soph.	Jun.	Sen.	All Under-grads
<i>Significantly different items (p<.05) are shaded in green- highest score in orange</i>					
My floor has an environment supportive of the academic achievement of residents	68%	69%	67%	69%	68%
My floor has set community standards for residents' behavior	88%	87%	84%	81%	87%
Floor members have generally followed the standards we set	74%	76%	68%	71%	74%
I have actively participated in setting or revising floor community standards	49%	49%	48%	40%	49%
When I have needed to sleep or study, it has generally been too loud on my floor	20%	19%	19%	19%	20%
Floor residents treat me with respect	83%	83%	81%	79%	83%
I have had a conflict with another floor resident (Skip if you haven't)	46%	42%	38%	36%	44%
I resolved this conflict successfully (skip if you had no conflict)	52%	50%	47%	50%	51%
I have felt like a valued member of the floor community	61%	63%	60%	60%	62%
I would be comfortable talking to another resident about a violation of a floor standard	56%	62%	66%	60%	58%
Floor members have shown respect for one another	79%	79%	78%	74%	79%
The Community Standards process (residents determining the common norms for their own behavior) has worked for our floor community	78%	77%	70%	68%	77%
I have felt safe living on my residence hall floor	91%	91%	89%	92%	91%
The activities of the student groups in my hall are of value to residents	54%	56%	51%	50%	54%
The activities of the student groups in my hall are of value to me	45%	45%	36%	36%	44%
I have found that the rules related to hall living are reasonable	86%	83%	82%	82%	85%