One question that I’ve been getting consistently from students is “Okay, we took the survey. We voiced our opinion. We told them what needs to be changed. Now what?”

The Students Speak Survey was conducted for IIT students to let the administrators of the school know where the IIT departments serving the students stand. The survey received an unprecedented response with more than 2700 students taking the survey, and the students of IIT have indeed voiced their opinion with about 600 pages of comments.

Naturally, students are eager to know if the survey had any impact on the school and its administration. I recently had the opportunity to be part of the core team that designed this survey, and I can tell you from what I have seen and heard so far, yes, the survey is being taken very, very seriously by the administration. They are 100% committed to improving the student experience.

I also had the opportunity to be part of the team that presented survey results to an audience comprised of the President, Provost, Vice Presidents, Deans, and department heads, who are in charge of the various service functions within IIT. The meeting discussed what IIT has to achieve to move forward. The survey was discussed as a benchmark for change and enhancement in every department. It has evoked various emotions from university leadership as the results of the survey were able to pinpoint exact areas within IIT where excellence has been reached, and other areas where real improvements are necessary. It was also very encouraging to see that the department heads were not taking the survey lightly, and they were committed to improving the customer experience. Our President, John Anderson, took it one step further by announcing standards of performance that the departments should achieve within specific time periods. With all these measures, it’s easy to see that the departments that are doing well will aim higher and the departments that are struggling are motivated to improve. All departments have been provided with their data report, as well as their specific set of student comments, so they will be able to identify and address opportunities for improvements.

Much credit goes to the University leadership for treating IIT students as customers that they truly care about. Their commitment to the survey process is evidence of their commitment to provide an excellent customer experience. Credit also goes to all the students who took part in the survey and thus became part of a movement to transform IIT. Personally, it has been a humbling experience to see that the university cares for the students and to be a part of a team that will result in an enhanced quality of life for generations of future IIT students.

In this special issue of TechNews, we are pleased to present the full executive summary of results that was presented to the President and Provost. We also have included a collection of responses from IIT service departments that reflect their initial reactions and plans for follow-up on the survey. Finally, we have included an interview with President Anderson that reflects his thoughts and plans on customer service at IIT.

**Students Speak Survey Team**

- **Elizabeth Corson**
  Undergraduate Chemical Engineering

- **Brian Kibbe**
  Undergraduate Mechanical Engineering / Math Education

- **Zeenatroohi Kwon**
  Graduate Psychology

- **Juan Martinez**
  Undergraduate Mechanical Engineering

- **Piyush Sinha**
  Undergraduate Computer Engineering

- **Seth Thomas**
  Graduate Mechanical Engineering

- **Danny Varghese**
  Undergraduate Business Administration

- **Kathryn Weissman**
  Undergraduate Civil Engineering

- **Bruce Fisher**
  Staff Advisor, Center for Research and Service
Introduction and Background

The Students Speak survey was designed and conducted by students. Students Speak is part of a strategy for improving the quality of administrative services provided to IIT students.

The on-line survey was administered by the Center for Research and Service to all IIT undergraduate and graduate students during the period of October 19 to October 30, 2009.

7 items reflecting students' overall experience at IIT

Evaluation of 24 departments
Three benchmark items plus custom items as appropriate
A comments section for each department

This summary report is based on:
- Survey items
- Write-in comments
- Focus group results

Response Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>% Favorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Management Center</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bog</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The International Office</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Services</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Employment</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Safety</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuttle Bus</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Undergraduate Affairs/Officce of Educational Services</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Resource Center</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Information Center</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Residence Life</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Counseling Services</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Executive Summary

The vast majority of students feel that they are treated with respect by IIT staff.

Most students feel safe on campus.

The university is not easy to navigate.

35% reported that they are frequently unable to get an answer or solution to a problem based on their initial contact with a department.

Approximately 1/3 of students frequently do not know which department to contact when they have a problem.

Service Stars are distinguished by timely, accurate response to students’ needs and high quality services. These departments rated at or above an 80% level of satisfaction:

- Campus Information Center
- Post Office
- Library
- Counseling Center
- Educational Services/Undergraduate Affairs
- Academic Resource Center
- International Center
- Registrar

Priorities for Improvement are represented by average satisfaction rates below 70%

- Housing
- Dining Services
- Career Management Center
- Financial Aid
- Keating Sports Center
- Bursar

Observations

Item View: Students Overall experience at IIT

Percent of students who responded favorably. Indices rated 80% or above are considered strengths. Indices rated below 70% present opportunities for improvement.

Item View: Most Favorably rated Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>% Favorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post Office</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Information Center</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Information Center</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Information Center</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Office</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Item View: Least Favorably rated Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>% Favorable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dining Services</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-Eleven</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining Services</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-Eleven</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-Eleven</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student Service Area Averages

This chart represents the composite of items for each student services department. The percentages represent favorable responses (e.g., students responding very satisfied or satisfied to the survey items).
This graph displays the most frequently identified themes in response to the open-ended question “What does Financial Aid needs to improve?”. 

Slow or No Response to Email or Voicemail

“Voice-mail boxes are always full and they never get back to me unless I call tons of times.”

“Answering the phone when it’s ringing or responding to emails within 24 hours would be nice.”

Inaccurate Information or Mistakes

“…they cannot even be trusted for basic math. This semester I was told I was getting a refund. I almost had to drop out for the semester. I will never trust the FA office again.”

More Timely Processing and Release of Aid

“TIMELINESS OF RECEIVING FUNDING. I have been to two others schools - this process is way more difficult here at it than other schools. You need to work harder at making this process faster”

Provide Proactive Notifications of Changes or Problems

“They need to notify students if there are problems with their financial aid packages and/or acceptance a little bit better… We should at least be notified there is something wrong with the processing of our loans.”

This graph displays the most frequently identified themes in response to the open-ended question “What does the Bursar’s Office need to improve?”. 

Unclear or Poorly Defined Processes

“The way in which tuition is paid for. I have to admit I’m astonished how hard it is to find the proper area of the website in which to make payments to the student account.”

Slow or No Response to Email or Voicemail

“I had to email them 3 times to get an explanation of one of the charges on my bill. A more timely response would have been more professional, especially on an issue that was resolved in about 5 minutes once someone looked at it.

“They need to pick up their phones, have a faster response to online inquiries (email especially), and be more communicative with the student body as to when they’ll be reimbursed.”

More Proactive in Providing Information

“I’ve had to go and ask them my monthly balance every time, cos the fact that I signed up for my payment plan doesn’t show up on my bills. It’s been inconvenient.”

“Failed to inform me that I had an outstanding balance before I had to register for classes. As a result I wasn’t able to get an ideal schedule including classes I would have liked to have taken.”

This graph displays the most frequently identified themes in response to the open-ended question “What does the Housing Office need to improve?”.

Maintenance Response Time & Upkeep

“washer and dryer machine didn’t work on the floor for a month!”

“Response time when Maintenance Requests are made.”

Housing Costs

“The housing contracts are very, very expensive. The housing is in no way adequate for the price we are being forced to pay for it. The prices need to decrease by a large margin.”

“Rates seem too high in comparison to other housing offers found close to campus”

Slow or No Response to Email or Voicemail

“They have a problem with not responding to questions for some reason. I applied for a DAS promotion in August and upon contacting housing more than 4 times they refused to answer my questions and I spent half of a semester without a DAS.”

“Never answer my question through email. Stop by their office and get 1 minute talk to their associate director, still no response. Worst customer service on campus.”

More Housing Options

“There is no flexibility at all. I would appreciate it if upperclassmen can get semester contracts.”

“The allotment is done with an iron hand giving little or no room for discussion. The student is not offered the choice to choose from at least two units or even to look at the allotted apartment before signing the lease.”

This graph displays the most frequently identified themes in response to the open-ended question “What does Dining Services need to improve?”. 

Food Quality

“Cooking the food for a longer time. I often get pizzas that are doughy and uncooked. Same goes for burgers.”

Hours of Operation

“Hours of operation need to be more open for commuter students. After 4 PM, a commuter student without a meal plan can only eat at 7-11. If Center Court were still open, I would definitely eat there after my last class.”

Prices

“Prices are a little too high for college students that do not have a meal plan.”

“I feel like campus food is extremely over priced. If I want to spend that much on food I would go somewhere nicer. It is one of the main factors of moving of campus.”

Food Variety

“a number of vegetarian cuisines should be added to the menu.”

“the school dining options are limited only from one company. We should introduce more food shops in campus.”
Comment Analysis: 7-11 - Need for Improvement

This graph displays the most frequently identified themes in response to the open-ended question “What does 7-11 need to improve?”

Food Selection
- “More vegetarian options! There are some frozen goods, but it’s hard to find fresh veggie options. I can only ever eat an egg salad sandwich or tuna sandwich...and the falafel (if there's any left). If I was a vegan, I’d be totally at a loss for options.”
- “Fresh healthy things to eat (beyond apples) are rarely found, and if provided, are very expensive.”

Prices
- “Prices are too expensive, at other 7-elevens in other parts of the city one can find the same items for up to a dollar or more less.”

Rude or Uncaring Behavior
- “Their customer service needs to improve. They are rude sometimes and just want you to get in and get out.”
- “The staff are very disrespectful, impatient, and mean.”

Comment Analysis: Keating Sports Center - Need for Improvement

This graph displays the most frequently identified themes in response to the open-ended question “What does the Keating Sports Center need to improve?”

Food Selection
- “More vegetarian options! There are some frozen goods, but it’s hard to find fresh veggie options. I can only ever eat an egg salad sandwich or tuna sandwich...and the falafel (if there's any left). If I was a vegan, I’d be totally at a loss for options.”
- “Fresh healthy things to eat (beyond apples) are rarely found, and if provided, are very expensive.”

Prices
- “Prices are too expensive, at other 7-elevens in other parts of the city one can find the same items for up to a dollar or more less.”

Rude or Uncaring Behavior
- “Their customer service needs to improve. They are rude sometimes and just want you to get in and get out.”
- “The staff are very disrespectful, impatient, and mean.”

Major Findings
We are creating a culture of respect for students
Eighty-nine percent of students reported that they are “consistently” or “usually” treated with respect by IIT staff.

We are creating a safe environment in which students live and learn
Eighty-four percent of students indicated that they “consistently” or “usually” feel safe on campus.

We have seven functions that have been designated Service Stars.

IIT is not easy to navigate
Many students don’t know where to go to get a question answered or a problem solved.

Recommendations
Follow up with student feedback
Presentation available online for all students
Special Technews insert
- Overview of results
- Service Stars
- Areas to improve
- Student recommendations for improvement
- Statement from President and Provost regarding efforts toward improvement

Provide regular updates on changes
Develop and publicize a Student Services Roadmap
- Benchmark other universities’ department and process maps
- A centralized repository that describes specific responsibilities of student services departments
- Process maps, especially for services that span departments
- Provided to students during orientation
- Posted on a website devoted to student services
- Reviewed and updated regularly based on department or process changes and student feedback

Develop a standardized process for transferring students between departments
- Replace cold transfers of students between departments with warm transfers (either by phone, direct personal collaboration, or cc on emails)
- To enable more efficient warm transfers and inter-departmental collaboration, co-locate departments that are jointly responsible for a student service process
- Support warm transfer implementation with targeted training for interdepartmental departments

Is it possible to improve customer service at 7-11?
If not:
- Select new convenience store
- 24 hours
- More grocery items
- Better customer service
- Lunch and dinner “to go” options

Improve Housing
“Given limited financial resources, what one area of the university should receive that investment?”, over 50% of focus group respondents indicated “Housing.” In turn, improvements that require direct financial investment should target housing:
- Develop enhanced and more responsive maintenance capabilities
- Repair leaking roofs and windows
- Additional...
Tuesday, February 23, 2010

- Develop more responsive Housing leadership and staff
- With RHA input, review housing contract and processes

Enhance Bursar's Office Communication to Students

Students feel ignored → Better email practices
- Specific
- Action Oriented
- Carbon copy

Students feel misunderstood → Transparency
- Standard of maximum assistance
- Special circumstance materials
- Prompt notification

Student Concerns → Staff Job Description
- Review and validate job description with a central student service theme and representation of above points

Enhance Financial Aid Office Communication to Students

Improve phone response capabilities
- Answer the phone
- Return voice mail messages on a timely basis
- Increase voice mail capacity (voice mail frequently full)

Students feel ignored → Better email practices
- Specific
- Action Oriented
- Carbon copy

Students feel misunderstood → Transparency
- Standard of maximum assistance
- Special circumstance materials
- Prompt notification

Responses from Departments

Office of Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid works with each of our service partners to provide financial assistance for students and families. We are committed to providing total customer satisfaction through friendly, professional, and personalized counseling. Our goal is to help students achieve their educational dreams at IIT.

Issues Raised
- Response time for emails is slow
- Inaccurate information
- Processing/release of aid could be more timely
- Notifications not proactive
- Need for better advice/counsel
- Need better interdepartmental coordination

Action Steps
- All student emails will receive a response within two business days, with the goal of returning inquiries within one business day or the same day.
- A complete review of print, website, and email communications will be conducted to determine accuracy. The goal is to ensure that all materials are promptly updated as changes occur. Individual students will be notified when changes that affect their financial aid package are made.
- A review of current business practices will be conducted in an effort to provide clear information about the disbursement of student federal and state aid, and clear maps regarding the funding process.
- Business processes will be reviewed to ensure that all changes and options for changes to a student's account are being addressed to the student proactively. All proposed changes will be presented in a timely manner, being mindful of the student's academic calendar and obligations as needed.
- A weekly "Money Matters" column in TechNews will be created to notify students about deadlines from the Office of Financial Aid.
- Monthly staff development and training sessions will be held to advance the skills and knowledge levels of the financial aid counselors in working with students and parents.
- The goal is to receive a 90 percent or better rating.
- Business practices and coordination meetings will be held with the following offices: Bursar, Academic Affairs, Graduate College, Registrar, Accounting, Housing, and Admission.
- An operational and business process review will be completed by March 31, 2010.
- A "warm transfer" among and between offices will be ensured, and the department will adopt an "own the issue" mindset in order to follow and track the issue until it is resolved.

Bursar's Office

The Bursar's Office is committed to providing exceptional service to our customers—students, faculty, and staff—with tuition payment and billing needs. The Students Speak survey is an extremely valuable tool for the Bursar's Office to determine the future actions needed to better satisfy our customers. To ensure the Bursar's Office continues to improve our customer service skills, the office will focus on improving three key areas: communication, business processes, and interdepartmental coordination.

Issues Raised
- Late or no responses to emails or voice mail
- Need for proactive communication on procedure changes
- Poor interpersonal relations with students
- Poorly defined business processes on payments and refunds
- "Cold" hand-off from one department to another department
- Inaccurate information given to students or applied to the student's account

Action Steps
- Metrics were developed to measure response time from receipt of initial email or voice mail to contact and resolution of the issue/inquiry. Metrics will be reviewed on a monthly basis with the team and posted to the Controller's Office website.
- Footprints were implemented to track emails from students and responses to students.
- A Bursar's specialist user manual was developed to define customer service expectations and processes for tracking customer metrics.
- A student focus group will be conducted to review options and offer advice on the best communication application, i.e., mailings, email, website posts, Facebook, Twitter.

Additional customer service training will be provided to Bursar's Office staff.
- Bursar's policies and procedures will be developed, redesigned, and reviewed with the goal of having all processes redesigned and tested by Summer 2010.
- TouchNet was implemented to improve efficiencies on payment plans and electronic refunds.
- A student focus group will be conducted to review the proposed business process improvements.
- Interdepartmental focus group sessions on improving the coordination among Financial Aid, Housing, Graduate College, and Undergraduate Admission will continue to be conducted. Financial Aid and the Bursar's Office implemented several protocols for the spring semester to improve the coordination between the two offices.
- The team will be trained on developing "soft" hand-off skills between Financial Aid, Housing, and the Bursar's Office.
- The Chief People Officer trained Bursar's Office staff in the development of metrics to track phone calls, billings, and emails.
- The Bursar's Office team developed "Our Promise to Our Customers," which was posted at the Bursar's Office window on Main Campus and at the cafeteria's window at the Downtown Campus.

Patricia Laughlin
Vice President for Finance and Administration

Brian Laffey
Associate Vice President for Finance and Controller

Housing Office

Housing and Residential Services empowers residents by providing support services and leadership opportunities that foster community development, academic success, and personal growth. Our staff provides quality living environment to ensure the comfort and well-being of residents and guests through campus accommodations within a diverse community.

Issues Raised
- Maintenance response time and upkeep, and condition of facilities
- Value of campus housing, including room and board cost
- Clear communication and use of notification, including response to emails and voice mail
- Communication about various room and board options
- Customer service training and execution for student and professional staff
- Community development and learning outcomes associated with living in the residence halls

Action Steps
- The former Residence Life and Housing Services departments were reorganized in November 2009.
- The Student Food Committee was reorganized to gather broader student feedback.
- The Housing and Residential Services staff met to discuss survey results and set improvement expectations.
- Room and board price benchmarking was completed.
- A new process for withdrawal/ dismissal was reviewed and improvements were made.
- A prominent link for customer feedback was posted on the department website.
- The staff will continue to be cross-trained in customer service, and expectations will be identified.
- The effectiveness of student communications regarding status of work orders was reassessed.
- The department will conduct ongoing assessment of maintenance and facility improvement programs.
- Student development opportunities and learning outcomes will be benchmarked.
- An initial meeting and follow-up meetings with the Housing Focus Group will be scheduled.
- The department anticipates a unified, student-focused office by Spring 2010.

Follow-up meetings with the Students Speak Focus Group will be held.
- Additional of service initiatives is at www.iit.edu/housing/commitment_to_excellence/index.shtml.

John Collins
Vice President for Business and Operations

Jean Bingham
Associate Vice President, Auxiliary Services
Dining Services

IIT Dining Services’ goal is to improve the quality of the daily lives of all the individuals we serve. Our mission is to contribute to the overall well-being, social, and environmental development of the IIT community through loyalty, respect, and business integrity.

Sodexo takes measures to address student concern proactively. Some ways in which we do this include conducting ab-annual student survey online and supplying a proprietary zip code analysis, which identifies, by region, student concerns regarding food type and cost. IIT Auxiliary Services assists, using information from its Secret Shopper Program as a means of identifying student preferences and standards.

Issues Raised

- Hours of operation
- Food variety and cost
- Late-night dining venue

Action Steps

- Dining Services will continue to work with the RHA Food Committee on a bi-weekly basis.
- The department began a discussion on contract modifications needed to provide additional service.
- Dining Services met with Seth Thomas, leader of the IIT Dining Focus Group, for additional insight.
- A 16-week student-specific menu, which most universities do not offer, is created each semester.
- Center Court’s January 2010 menu offerings were reworked to provide a lower price point in an effort to build customer loyalty.

7 - 11

The mission of 7-11 is to consistently serve the changing needs of customers for their convenience and to be the best retailer of convenience. The Students Speak survey has indicated three areas of concern. In an effort to address concerns about price, a pricing benchmark of Chicago-area 7-11 branches (see chart) was taken. It indicates that the prices at the IIT location are similar to those at other area stores.

- Center Court continues to offer a bi-weekly rotation in the Simply-To-Go grab-and-go cooler, offering a wide variety of sandwich and salad options throughout the semester.
- The Commons now offers organic, gluten-free, and specialty items for purchase in the UnCommon Corner, which is open during breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
- Seasonal limited-time offers with special menu items are offered at Einstein Bros. Bagels and in Campus Catering.
- Dining Services will continue to change the product mix as the customer base dictates.
- The “Hey Joe Board” will be used to address how low Student feedback survey is managed.
- The department will continue Sodexo’s Circle of Customer Excellence training and tie it to performance reviews.
- Menu compliance and additional “UnCommon” days will be ensured.
- Follow-up meetings with the Students Speak Focus Group will be held.
- The focus of the RHA Food Committee will be changed to include broader student representation.
- A second late-night dining survey will be implemented.
- Continued improvement and expansion of student engagement is expected by Spring 2010.

Issues Raised

- Prices
- Rude or uncaring behavior on the part of staff
- Food selection

Action Steps

- Auxiliary Services met with 7-11 management to discuss survey results and

Keating Sports Center

The Department of Athletics and Recreation strives to provide the best service it can to our students and campus community. Often, there are shortcomings and oversights, which our constituents recognize but cannot voice due to a lack of process for feedback. The Students Speak survey was one such opportunity for valuable feedback, both positive and negative. The

Issues Raised

- New/different equipment
- Increased space
- Expanded hours
- Equipment maintenance
- Temperature control/ventilation

Career Management Center

Career Management Center (CMC) is committed to providing exceptional service to our customers—IT’s students and employers—by engaging them to meet their career goals and by assisting in attaining the necessary skills to manage their careers successfully. The Students Speak survey was extremely valuable to the CMC in determining the future actions needed to better satisfy our customers. The primary area indicated for improvement was the CMC’s Career Fair. The CMC thanks the students who completed the survey for their open and honest feedback.

Issues Raised

- Increase the number of companies and job opportunities
- Specifically, increase the opportunities for international students

Action Steps

- Continued capability through LinkedIn, Facebook, and online marketing.
- Online marketing efforts are on-going with the CMC’s new website.

Issues Raised

- New/different equipment
- Increased space
- Expanded hours
- Equipment maintenance
- Temperature control/ventilation

Career Management Center (CMC) was established, including members representing the various colleges.

The CMC’s expanded its efforts with deans, chairs, faculty, and others to increase the number of job opportunities, with a special emphasis on the less well- served areas of aerospace, architecture, business, medical engineering, business, food, safety, humanities, sciences, and psychology. Additional focus has been placed on attracting start-up companies, government agencies, University Technology Park companies, alumni companies, and IIT Board of Trustees and Boards of Overseers’ organizations.

- Efforts to attract more employers to the Career Fair are included and we’re working with 8,000+ employers; more than 700 telephone solicitations; president’s invitations to trustee companies; president’s invitations to employers; the Jobs Council contacted companies, Institutional Advancement sent invitations to alumni; and Career Fair information was posted on professional websites and on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

- Operationally, the Career Fair is spread out over the weekend to ensure that students can attend and internships are under review.

- Selected articles in TechNews will include the CMC and Student Employment functions.

- We are currently working on a paperless replacement for the paper-based evaluation process for co-op and internship students; improvements to the process on the initial paperwork for co-ops and internships are under review.

- New walk-in hours: Tuesdays, 9 a.m.–noon; Wednesdays, 1–4 p.m.; and Fridays, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

- Training sessions were expanded to include afternoon sessions, and will include evening workshop sessions starting in Fall 2010.

- The CMC will publish a road map for the CMC and Student Employment functions.

The top 20 FAQs as determined by the SAC will be available in April 2010.

- There will be continually expanding communication capabilities through LinkedIn and Facebook.

- Continued articles in TechNews will include future topics on student job expectations (especially in a changing economic climate), the value of work during school years, future opportunities, and to work only at “big name” organizations.

- CMC results will be monitored continually through surveys, with feedback from surveys, emails and front desk surveys, quality metric, and number of job opportunities available. The SAC will be asked to provide ongoing feedback.

- Bruce Mueller
- Tanya Harrison

Career Management Center

Bruce Mueller
Exhibit Manager
Tanya Harrison
CMC Managing Director

Operational, the Career Fair is spread out over the weekend to ensure that students can attend and internships are under review.

- New walk-in hours: Tuesdays, 9 a.m.–noon; Wednesdays, 1–4 p.m.; and Fridays, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

- Training sessions were expanded to include afternoon sessions, and will include evening workshop sessions starting in Fall 2010.

- In May, the CMC will publish a road map for the CMC and Student Employment functions.

- The top 20 FAQs as determined by the SAC will be available in April 2010.

- There will be continually expanding communication capabilities through LinkedIn and Facebook.

- Continued articles in TechNews will include future topics on student job expectations (especially in a changing economic climate), the value of work during school years, future opportunities, and to work only at “big name” organizations.

- CMC results will be monitored continually through surveys, with feedback from surveys, emails and front desk surveys, quality metric, and number of job opportunities available. The SAC will be asked to provide ongoing feedback.

- Bruce Mueller
- Tanya Harrison

Career Management Center

Bruce Mueller
Exhibit Manager
Tanya Harrison
CMC Managing Director

Operational, the Career Fair is spread out over the weekend to ensure that students can attend and internships are under review.

- New walk-in hours: Tuesdays, 9 a.m.–noon; Wednesdays, 1–4 p.m.; and Fridays, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

- Training sessions were expanded to include afternoon sessions, and will include evening workshop sessions starting in Fall 2010.

- In May, the CMC will publish a road map for the CMC and Student Employment functions.

- The top 20 FAQs as determined by the SAC will be available in April 2010.

- There will be continually expanding communication capabilities through LinkedIn and Facebook.

- Continued articles in TechNews will include future topics on student job expectations (especially in a changing economic climate), the value of work during school years, future opportunities, and to work only at “big name” organizations.

- CMC results will be monitored continually through surveys, with feedback from surveys, emails and front desk surveys, quality metric, and number of job opportunities available. The SAC will be asked to provide ongoing feedback.

- Bruce Mueller
- Tanya Harrison

Career Management Center

Bruce Mueller
Exhibit Manager
Tanya Harrison
CMC Managing Director

Operational, the Career Fair is spread out over the weekend to ensure that students can attend and internships are under review.

- New walk-in hours: Tuesdays, 9 a.m.–noon; Wednesdays, 1–4 p.m.; and Fridays, 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

- Training sessions were expanded to include afternoon sessions, and will include evening workshop sessions starting in Fall 2010.

- In May, the CMC will publish a road map for the CMC and Student Employment functions.

- The top 20 FAQs as determined by the SAC will be available in April 2010.

- There will be continually expanding communication capabilities through LinkedIn and Facebook.

- Continued articles in TechNews will include future topics on student job expectations (especially in a changing economic climate), the value of work during school years, future opportunities, and to work only at “big name” organizations.

- CMC results will be monitored continually through surveys, with feedback from surveys, emails and front desk surveys, quality metric, and number of job opportunities available. The SAC will be asked to provide ongoing feedback.

- Bruce Mueller
- Tanya Harrison

Career Management Center

Bruce Mueller
Exhibit Manager
Tanya Harrison
CMC Managing Director
President Anderson speaks on the Student Speak Survey

By Antoinette Smith

The following is the vision of IIT as stated in the 2010-2014 Strategic Plan: “IIT will be internationally recognized in distinctive areas of education and research, using as its platform the global city of Chicago, driven by a professional and technology-oriented focus, and based on a culture of innovation and excellence.”

President Anderson, whose business card is imprinted with that same statement, says the Students Speak survey gets at the excellence part of that statement. He calls this initiative “probably the best idea I’ve ever had.” After four decades in academia, holding roles from professor to dean, that’s quite a statement. Calling on those decades of experience, Anderson said, “I don’t know if we’re the first [university to do such a survey], but we are certainly one of the few.”

The students have spoken and, thanks to this special TechNews insert, the entire student body gets a chance to see what their peers are thinking. As a student, you get a feeling from peers and personal experiences, just what is working and not working at IIT. The same held true for President Anderson. “Well! I have had students in my office during my office hours and they’ve complained about various processes. We call [these] one-off complaints, because Student A will complain about this office and then Student B would complain about another office,” said Anderson when asked about how the idea for Students Speak came about.

Acting on those complaints proved to be time-consuming and inefficient. “[T]he complaints weren’t actionable. Like if someone complains that such an office’s service is lousy, I can’t do anything about that. What’s lousy about it? Give me an example. Plus, I am not the right person, because then I have to go to the vice presidents or the deans. I found myself continuously writing memos.”

Anderson consulted with Bruce Fisher, PhD, director of the Center for Research and Service to determine how to best turn these one-off complaints into something actionable. Trusting Fisher’s expertise, Anderson hired him as a consultant to recruit the “right” to 10 excellent students, representing a diversity of thought from different parts of the campus to form the Students Speak team.

Following are key snippets of Anderson’s responses to questions about the Students Speak process and its future impact on IIT.

Antoinette: What went well?
President Anderson: “Th[ere] usually don’t work the first time. This time it did… I am impressed by what the student committee and Dr. Fisher did.”

Antoinette: What could be improved?
President Anderson: “More effort to get feedback from the units being evaluated. Suppose they go to the accounting office and ask what they think of the questions. We put a lot of effort in. Not sure how extensive. “

“I was pleasantly surprised by how well the library (Galvin) did. It says a lot for the [dean] of the library, Dr. Stewart, and the people that work for him. He hires a lot of students, almost 100, and they have to be trained. That is what is surprising. It’s hard to train a lot of students to be receptive, but I guess as students they know how it feels to not get good service. [I want to use Galvin Library] as example for other units that have a lot of student workers.”

Antoinette: What do you think of the current level of student/customer service at IIT?
President Anderson: “Customer service is a B-plus today. It was less than that before [the survey]. We put a lot of effort in. Not just me, but the provost and some of the vice presidents. We want to get to an A, not an A-minus but an A. That may take a couple of years.”

“I’ve sampled six universities, so I know what it’s like and the times have changed over the years. But I would say we fit above the average of the other six, and so I would say B-plus is reasonable. We have also had to look at how we’re organized.”

Antoinette: What were the Surprising and not so surprising results?
President Anderson: “[There were] two pleasant surprises. [For] one of the highest items, do you feel safe on campus, 80 percent said yes - that was extremely gratifying for me. You have to feel safe where you are to fully engage in everything. And, [two], that most of the staff treated them with respect.”

“[There were] negative responses, which you kind of expect. I have been talking to students for a couple of years, so [there was] nothing shocking. Some units that didn’t do well, I kind of guessed.”

Antoinette: What’s next?
President Anderson: “[V]ice presidents will make recommendations to me and provost and then they will institute these changes and follow up with a survey next year. [I] will likely hire Dr. Fisher again. He might try to get new students or maybe [retain] some from this year for continuity.”

“I don’t want to tire students out. It’s a lot of work. Next fall, [we may use] the same questions or different questions. [We may use] some additional questions on if students have seen improvement.”

“Determining the impact of the survey after one year is enough. I am really wondering if we should wait two years to do it. It’s a lot to ask of the students. I’m not worried about spending the money. But, it takes a lot of input and leadership from students. I would be happy to do it yearly though.”

 “[We’re currently] training more of the managers than the people under the managers. Then, we have to train those under the managers. That’s the next step. So, there will be some training of people. Not sure how extensive.”

“Want to please 90 percent of the people most of the time. We do that and we will be in the top categories of universities.”
You Voiced your Opinion

We Listened

Thank you for filling out the Student Speak Survey
Your voice has helped bring change to iit
Help continue this cycle of change
Take the survey again next year

iit.edu/students_speak