AREA IV

SUPPORT TO STUDENTS

I.1. Researches on student affairs and services are conducted.
I.2. Research results and outputs are disseminated and utilized.
I.3. Regular monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of student services are conducted.
I.4. Monitoring and evaluation instruments are developed, reviewed, and continuously improved.

Surveying Client Satisfaction with Student Services: Insights and Strategic Directions from the University of Southern Mindanao

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Abstract
This study evaluates alumni satisfaction with the student services provided by the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) at the University of Southern Mindanao (USM) during the academic years 2022–2023 and 2023–2024. Anchored in a descriptive-evaluative research design, the survey collected quantitative data via purposive sampling of recent graduates through an online platform. The study assessed perceptions across key service domains, including information dissemination, career and counseling support, scholarship and financial assistance, medical services, student publication, entrance examination processes, slot reservation systems, safety and security services, and sports and recreational facilities. Findings reveal an overall upward trend in student satisfaction, with marked improvements in excellent ratings particularly in areas of safety and security, financial assistance, and counseling services. Notably, the proportion of alumni reporting dissatisfaction decreased across most categories, signaling effective institutional efforts in responding to student needs. However, a slight

decline in satisfaction was observed in the student publication services, warranting further enhancement. The evidence underscores the importance of continuous feedback mechanisms and responsive program development to ensure service quality and alignment with student expectations. The study concludes that data-driven evaluations of student services are vital for strengthening institutional support structures and fostering holistic student development. These insights will inform strategic planning within the OSA, ensuring that student-centered services continue to evolve in tandem with the needs of USM's diverse academic community.

Keywords: Client satisfaction survey; public service, state university; student affairs and services

INTRODUCTION

The Office of Student Affairs (OSA) at the University of Southern Mindanao (USM) serves as a cornerstone of student development, providing essential support systems that contribute to students' academic, personal, and professional success. As higher education institutions continue to evolve in response to increasing diversity, technological change, and mental health challenges, the role of student affairs has become more critical than ever (Schuh, Jones, & Harper, 2010). The OSA fulfills this role by offering a wide range of student-centered services, including academic advising, career and mental health counseling, recreational programs, safety and security initiatives, and information dissemination, all of which holistically support student life beyond the classroom.

Student success is influenced not only by curriculum and pedagogy but also by the broader collegiate environment. Foundational research highlights that institutional support services significantly shape students' academic achievement, engagement, and persistence (Astin, 1997; Tinto, 2012; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). In particular, Astin's theory of student involvement emphasizes that the extent of student engagement in college activities directly affects developmental outcomes, while Tinto's model of student departure stresses the importance of academic and social integration for retention. Thus, the effectiveness of OSA programs can serve as a barometer of institutional impact on student achievement and well-being.

Contemporary studies further underscore that robust student services are essential to building a thriving campus community. Kuh's (2008) framework on high-impact educational practices asserts that activities such as academic advising, experiential learning, and student involvement contribute meaningfully to learning and persistence. Similarly, Kuh et al. (2008) empirically demonstrate that student engagement correlates with improved grades and retention, particularly during the critical first year. The importance of these services is even more pronounced among today's students, who often navigate complex transitions and multiple stressors. Eisenberg, Lipson, and Posselt (2016) argue that institutions must prioritize mental health programming to enhance student resilience and retention, while Huang et al. (2018) confirm that evidence-based interventions significantly reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression in university populations.

This study evaluates the effectiveness of OSA services by analyzing student perceptions collected during the 2022, 2023, and 2023, 2024 academic years. Focusing on key areas, including information dissemination, counseling and career services, the slot reservation system, campus safety, and recreational facilities, the study aims to identify strengths, gaps, and patterns of improvement. Research has shown that these service areas are critical touchpoints in enhancing the overall student experience. For instance, Strayhorn (2018) highlights the importance of a sense of belonging in fostering academic motivation, especially among marginalized student groups. Coomes and DeBard (2004) also point out that generational shifts in student expectations require institutions to modernize service delivery and improve accessibility.

The relevance of career and counseling services has grown in parallel with increasing student concerns about employability and life after graduation. Recent studies affirm that when such services

decline in satisfaction was observed in the student publication services, warranting further enhancement. The evidence underscores the importance of continuous feedback mechanisms and responsive program development to ensure service quality and alignment with student expectations. The study concludes that data-driven evaluations of student services are vital for strengthening institutional support structures and fostering holistic student development. These insights will inform strategic planning within the OSA, ensuring that student-centered services continue to evolve in tandem with the needs of USM's diverse academic community.

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The relevance of career and counseling services has grown in parallel with increasing student concerns about employability and life after graduation. Recent studies affirm that when such services

are well-implemented, they improve students' preparedness and career clarity. Coman et al. (2025) found that students' perception of career counseling quality significantly influences their confidence in navigating the labor market. Likewise, Khatri et al. (2024) stress the need for validated tools to measure and manage student well-being, arguing that universities should integrate mental health with academic and career guidance as part of a cohesive support strategy.

The rationale behind this institutional assessment lies in the imperative for continuous improvement. Effective student affairs programs are not static, they must adapt to the evolving demographics, expectations, and mental health profiles of the student body (Kinzie, 2009). Terenzini et al. (1994) emphasize that students' transition to college varies widely depending on their backgrounds, necessitating responsive and inclusive support systems. Furthermore, Roberts and McNeese (2010) note that student origin and social context influence engagement, which in turn impacts persistence and satisfaction.

In this context, the present study provides a timely and evidence-based evaluation of the OSA's role in shaping student outcomes. By analyzing student feedback across two academic years, this research seeks to contribute actionable insights for institutional decision-making and policy refinement. The findings will help align OSA services with student expectations while reinforcing the office's mission to foster a supportive, inclusive, and dynamic learning environment.

Ultimately, the Office of Student Affairs at USM is not merely a service provider, it is a strategic partner in student success. As higher education institutions face new challenges and expectations, a well-functioning OSA, grounded in empirical research and student-centered practice, remains vital to cultivating a thriving academic community where all students are empowered to succeed.

METHODOLOGY

This survey utilized a descriptive-evaluative design to assess the satisfaction levels of alumni regarding the services provided by the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) at the University of Southern Mindanao (USM). The primary objective of the survey was to gather insights into the alumni's perceptions of various student services, including information dissemination, career and counseling services, slot reservation systems, safety and security, and sports and recreational facilities during their time at the university.

The survey was conducted using a Google Forms platform, which was established and administered by the OSA. The Google Forms survey was designed to capture quantitative data on alumni satisfaction, with specific questions targeting their experiences with the services provided during their enrollment at USM. The survey was distributed to alumni who graduated within the inclusive years of 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, ensuring a diverse representation of recent graduates.

The respondents were selected through purposive sampling, a non-random technique that was used to identify individuals who had direct experience with the services provided by the OSA during their time at the university. This sampling method allowed the survey to focus on alumni who were familiar with and had utilized these services, ensuring that the data collected would accurately reflect their experiences and perceptions.

A total of 2,759 respondents participated in the 2022-2023 academic year survey, while 2,711 respondents contributed to the 2023-2024 survey. These respondents represent a cross-section of alumni, providing a broad perspective on the effectiveness and impact of the services offered by the OSA.

Through this methodology, the survey aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of alumni satisfaction with USM's student services, offering valuable feedback to the Office of Student Affairs to guide future improvements. The descriptive survey design enabled the personnel of OSA to analyze

trends and patterns in alumni perceptions over the two academic years, providing insights that are essential for enhancing the student experience at USM.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Students' rating of the University information dissemination

The comparison between the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 survey results shows a positive trend in students' perceptions of the University's information dissemination. While the total number of responses slightly decreased from 2,759 in 2022-2023 to 2,711 in 2023-2024, the overall sentiment improved. The percentage of students rating the dissemination as "very poor" decreased from 3.9% to 3%, and the "poor" ratings also saw a slight drop from 3.6% to 4.1%. This indicates a reduction in dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the percentage of students who rated it as "average" dropped from 16.7% to 13.9%, reflecting fewer students seeing the information dissemination as merely adequate. The "good" ratings saw a slight decline from 36% to 34.7%, but the most significant improvement was in the "excellent" category, where the percentage of students who rated the information dissemination as exceptional rose from 39.8% to 44.3%. This indicates that more students felt the university's communication efforts were outstanding in 2023-2024. Overall, the data suggests that students' perceptions of the university's information dissemination have become more positive, with a noticeable increase in those considering it excellent and fewer rating it as poor or merely average.

Figure 1. Students' rating of the University information dissemination, 2022-2023

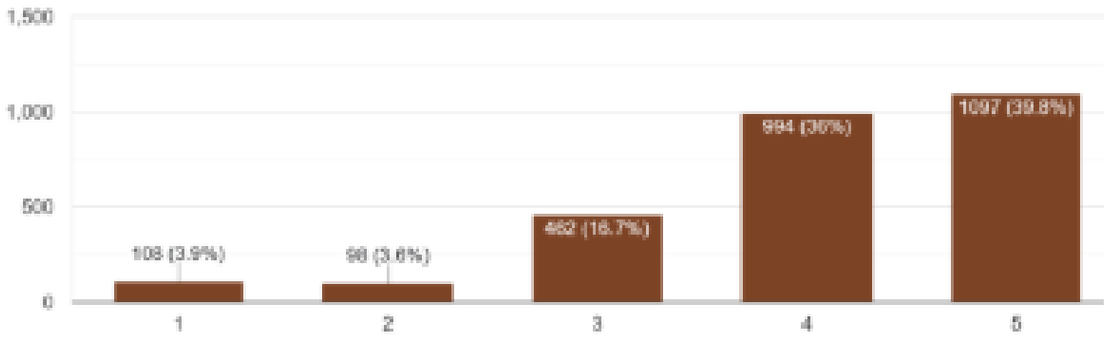
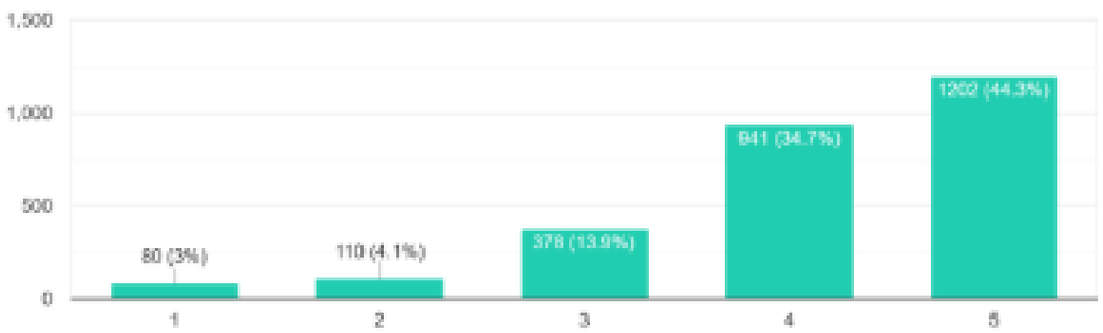


Figure 2. Students' rating of the University information dissemination, 2023-2024



Students' rating of the career and counseling services of the University

The comparison of students' ratings for the Career and Counseling services of the University between 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 reveals a positive shift in perceptions. Although there was a slight decrease in overall responses from 2,759 to 2,711, the data shows an improvement in how students viewed the services. The percentage of students who rated the services as "very poor" decreased from 3.2% to 2.5%, and the "poor" ratings also declined from 4.1% to 3.2%, indicating a reduction in

dissatisfaction. More significantly, the number of students who rated the services as "average" dropped from 23% to 17.3%, suggesting that fewer students felt the services were merely adequate. The most notable improvement was seen in the "excellent" ratings, which increased from 31.9% to 40%, reflecting a significant rise in student satisfaction. Although the "good" ratings decreased slightly from 37.8% to 36.9%, the overall trend points to a more favorable view of the services, with a larger portion of students considering them outstanding. This shift indicates that the Career and Counseling services have made noticeable strides in improving students' experiences, as more students now rate them highly, and fewer rate them poorly.

Figure 3. Students' rating of the career and counseling services of the University, 2022- 2023

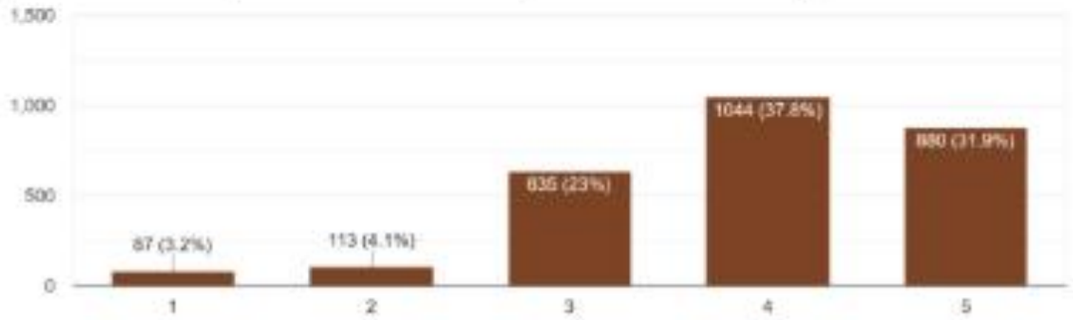
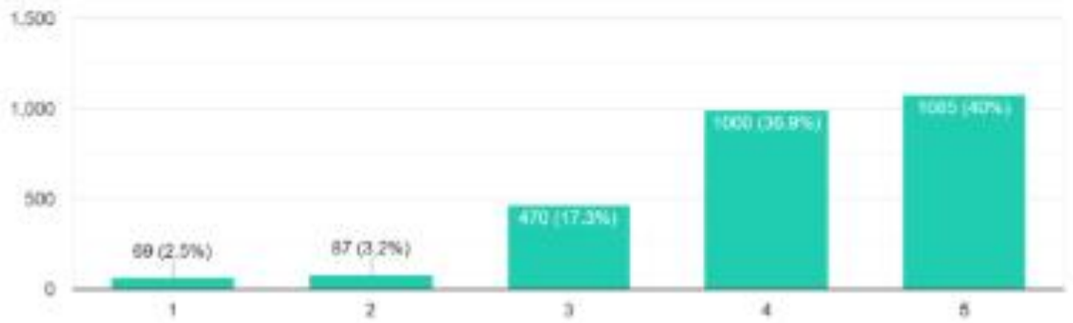


Figure 4. Students' rating of the career and counseling services of the University, 2023- 2024



Students' rating of the scholarship and financial assistance provided in the University

The comparison between the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 survey results on the university's Scholarship and Financial Assistance services shows a positive shift in student satisfaction. Although there was a slight decrease in the total number of responses from 2,759 to 2,711, the trends in student ratings indicate an improvement in the perception of these services. In 2023-2024, the percentage of students rating the services as "very poor" dropped significantly from 5.4% in 2022-2023 to 2.5%. This reduction in dissatisfaction is a clear sign that fewer students found the services to be inadequate or unsatisfactory.

Similarly, the percentage of students rating the services as "poor" decreased from 5.9% to 3.2%, further highlighting the decline in negative feedback. These changes suggest that the university's efforts to improve the Scholarship and Financial Assistance programs may have contributed to reducing student dissatisfaction. Additionally, the "average" rating dropped from 25.9% in 2022-2023 to 17.3% in 2023-2024, indicating a shift towards more favorable opinions. With fewer students rating the services as just adequate, it reflects a more positive outlook on the effectiveness and quality of the assistance provided.

The safety and security services displayed the most outstanding improvement, with "excellent" ratings soaring from 44.3% to 50.6%. Yet, the fact that some students still expressed dissatisfaction, albeit a minority, indicates isolated incidents or inconsistency in service coverage. To ensure uniform safety, the university should map security blind spots, regularly upgrade surveillance infrastructure, and foster a visible, approachable security presence on campus. Moreover, building a culture of shared responsibility through student participation in safety initiatives can enhance the perception of campus security.

Lastly, although satisfaction with sports and recreational facilities improved significantly, 24.9% of students still rated them as merely "average." This suggests that while progress has been made, issues such as overcrowding, outdated equipment, or limited program diversity may persist. To address these, the university should consider upgrading facilities, diversifying offerings to include wellness and mental health-related activities, and involving students in planning and managing recreational programs to ensure inclusivity and alignment with their interests.

While the study offers valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations. The data relied solely on quantitative survey responses, which do not fully capture the nuanced experiences of students. Moreover, the sample saw a slight decrease in participation from year to year, which may influence representativeness. The absence of qualitative data and the narrow time frame, spanning only two academic years, limit the depth and longitudinal perspective of the analysis.

To overcome these limitations, future research should incorporate mixed-methods approaches, combining surveys with interviews, focus groups, and open-ended responses to gain richer insights. Longitudinal studies that span multiple cohorts could identify long-term trends and the sustained impact of institutional reforms. Additionally, segmenting the analysis by demographic factors such as college, gender, year level, or financial background could uncover disparities in service access and satisfaction, guiding more equitable improvements. Comparative research with other universities could also offer benchmarking data to inspire innovation and validate best practices.

Furthermore, as digital transformation becomes increasingly central to university operations, future research should explore how the adoption of technology across services influences student satisfaction, engagement, and academic outcomes. Understanding the interplay between digital literacy, service design, and student expectations will be critical in shaping a more efficient and inclusive student support ecosystem.

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I.5. Reports are filed and submitted regularly to CHEDRO.

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OFFICE OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

NARRATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT
January – December 2025



The Office of Student Affairs, with its five 5 departments, remains committed to providing

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services to the students at this University. The Office performed beyond its mandated functions and has gained the trust and confidence of many, if not all, students, parents, and other stakeholders.

The Office played a significant role during the 79TH COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES and CLUSTER GRADUATIONS:

Organized the Class Mayors of the Graduates. The OSA facilitated a consultation meeting with the class mayors of all graduating classes on June 4, 2025, at the University Guidance Center, together with the ARO and UQAC directors. The dress code, graduation song, pictorial, tokens for parents, program flow, and other details were thoroughly discussed, resulting in a successful and meaningful graduation.



Figure 1. Consultation with the class mayors of graduates.

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Figure 2. Consultation for Cluster Graduation and Commencement Exercises.



Figure 3. The ARO and UQAC Directors discussed the flow of the programs.

Established Guidelines for Capturing Pictures. The University Guidelines for taking pictures during graduation ceremonies were crafted by the Office and were approved by the SSMO for implementation. The guidelines aim to facilitate efficient and organized picture-taking practices. Concerning this, the Office provided orientation to the qualified official photographers for the said events and introduced them to their respective college clientele. In addition, the Office prepared the layout, reproduced, and released the photographers' official IDs and monitored their practices throughout the events, both inside the Auditorium and at the photo booths. The Office launched a Google Form evaluation to assess the performance of the service providers rendered. Finally, the