

University of Northern Iowa  
Maucker Union

**Student Perceptions of Maucker Union Gathered Through  
The ACUI/EBI, Inc. College Union/Student Center Survey**

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## Abstract

Maucker Union administered the web-based College Union/Student Center Survey through EBI, Inc. in March of 2009, in accordance with the Maucker Union assessment plan, which calls for this survey to be done every two years. Responses to the survey designed to gather student perceptions on aspects of the Maucker Union were received from 527 students (15% response rate). Results were broken down by several different “factors” related to overall student satisfaction with Maucker Union.

## Executive Summary

### Purpose

The survey was administered to gather student perceptions about Maucker Union. The bench-marking aspect of the survey compares Maucker Union results with results from six participating peer institutions selected by Maucker Union, all participants in the UNI Carnegie class, and all participants in general. Maucker Union staff also developed 10 institution-specific questions designed to gather more detailed information about what students were hoping to see in the Maucker Union.

### Methodology

The survey was administered to a stratified (by class standing) random sample of 3,500 UNI undergraduate and graduate students in March, 2009. The administration was web-based, with students being invited to participate and complete the survey via a web site. The results were analyzed according to the following “factors:”

1. Maucker Union publicizes the Union and promotes campus activities
2. Maucker Union has a positive environment
3. Maucker Union is student-oriented
4. Maucker Union is a source of entertainment
5. Maucker Union enhances life and leadership
6. Satisfaction with Maucker Union food variety, quality and price
7. Satisfaction with other aspects of Maucker Union dining service
8. Satisfaction with Bookstore staff
9. Satisfaction with Bookstore item variety and price
10. Maucker Union cleanliness
11. Maucker Union staff
12. Overall program effectiveness

### Findings

Results for each factor were tabulated and communicated according to the performance descriptors provided in the table below.

**Table 1. Performance Descriptors for Factors**

| Performance Descriptor | Mean Range   |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Superior               | Mean >6.5    |
| Excellent              | Mean 5.5-6.5 |
| Good                   | Mean 4.5-5.5 |
| Fair                   | Mean 3.5-4.5 |
| Poor                   | Mean 2.5-3.5 |
| Very Poor              | Mean 1.5-2.5 |
| Extremely Poor         | Mean <1.5    |

For the purposes of this summary, it was decided that it would be useful to review the results in the context of the results of the last two surveys, conducted in 2005 and 2007. In the 2007 rendition of the Maucker Union Survey Report, Page 2

survey, regression analysis revealed that the top three predictors of overall satisfaction with Maucker Union were: Factor 5: Maucker Union enhances life and leadership (rated “Fair”), Factor 11: Maucker Union staff (rated “Good”), and Factor 6: Maucker Union food variety, quality and price (rated “Good”). The results of this analysis led Maucker Union to identify these factors as priorities for improvement. The longitudinal comparisons of survey ratings for these factors are given in the table below.

**Table 2. Longitudinal Comparison of Ratings for the Top Three Predictors of Overall Satisfaction with Maucker Union, with Performance Descriptions**

| Predictor Rank   | Predictor Factor Title                                  | 2005 Rating        | 2007 Rating                 | 2009 Rating                      |
|------------------|---|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Top Predictor    | Factor 5: Maucker Union enhances life and leadership    | baseline<br>“Fair” | 4%<br>improvement<br>“Fair” | 10%<br>improvement<br>“Fair”     |
| Second Predictor | Factor 11: Maucker Union staff                          | baseline<br>“Good” | 1%<br>improvement<br>“Good” | 2%<br>improvement<br>“Excellent” |
| Third Predictor  | Factor 6: Maucker Union food variety, quality and price | baseline<br>“Good” | 6% decline<br>“Good”        | steady<br>“Good”                 |

To address the top predictor of satisfaction with Maucker Union, “Factor 5: Maucker Union enhances life and leadership,” the Student Leadership Center was developed and launched in the fall of 2007. The Student Leadership Center has enjoyed two years of increasingly successful programs, along with increased attendance at those programs. In the 2007 survey, two of the individual questions within this factor were among the three lowest-rated of all of the survey questions. These individual question ratings, while still within the 15 lowest rated questions, are no longer at the bottom of the ratings list. For the factor overall, its rating in the current 2009 survey was just short of moving from the “Fair” descriptor level to the “Good” descriptor level. Results of this survey confirm the results of the detailed program reports and the CAS Self-Assessment which have been conducted for the Student Leadership Center: while the Student Leadership Center has had a great start, there is still much to do bring the program to its desired level.

The specific areas requiring attention for the Student Leadership Center have been identified as: refining the purpose and mission of the Student Leadership Center, improved promotion of the Student Leadership Center, and achieving adequate staffing and resourcing for the Student Leadership Center. One of the institution-specific questions that Maucker Union developed for the survey asked how students would describe their awareness of the Student Leadership Center. Approximately 75% of the respondents indicated that they were unaware of the Student Leadership Center, or didn’t really know what it was, reinforcing the need for increased promotion. Another institution-specific question related to the Student Leadership Center asked how many student organizations the respondent belonged to. Approximately 25% of the respondents chose an answer indicating that they didn’t belong to any student organizations. This question will be revised to provide a more accurate estimate of involvement in future surveys. Related to the previous question, another institution-specific question asked students to describe the importance of getting involved in campus organizations. Approximately 39% of the respondents indicated that while they believed involvement was important, they didn’t know how to get involved. Involvement in campus life is a key performance indicator that will continue to be tracked through these questions. The Student Leadership Center can be instrumental in promoting student involvement on campus.

At the time of the 2007 survey, Maucker Union was undergoing extensive staff re-structuring in conjunction with targeted hiring initiatives. It was anticipated that this focused attention on staffing would result in improvement to the ratings for the second predictor, “Factor 11: Maucker Union staff.”

The current Maucker Union staff has been in place for two full years. As demonstrated in the table above, there has been steady improvement in the ratings of Maucker Union staff, with the overall factor rating moving into the “Excellent” descriptor level in the current survey. In light of the current budget crisis, the challenge for Maucker Union will be maintaining the current staffing level and the concomitant level of service to students.

Maucker Union and Department of Residence Dining Services staffs continue to work together with the Maucker Union Advisory Board on the third predictor, “Factor 6: Maucker Union food variety, quality and price.” A new food venue called “Café Fresca” replaced the “Blimpie” sub sandwich venue in Fall, 2007, and all of the individual food venues are continually reviewed by Dining Services. The ratings for this factor have remained fairly consistent from the 2007 survey to the current rendition.

The results indicate that students continue to have strong positive feelings about Maucker Union in general. For Question 73, “Overall level of satisfaction with Maucker Union,” the response rating was “Excellent.” The longitudinal survey results for “Factor 12: Overall program effectiveness” also demonstrate increasing student satisfaction with Maucker Union; the rating for this factor has improved approximately 5% since the 2005 survey.

### **Discussion**

The results of the 2009 ACUI/EBI, Inc. College Union/Student Center Survey will be particularly useful as the development of the Student Leadership Center continues. The current results appear to support the specific areas which have been identified for extra attention.

The survey also yielded information which will assist the Maucker Union staff and the Maucker Union Advisory Board in facility and revenue generation planning. While the results of the 2007 supported the addition of a bank branch in Maucker Union (which was completed in Fall, 2008), the current survey indicated an interest in a “Red Box” movie rental unit or a US Post Office drop. In the current survey, students also indicated an interest in a 24-7 computer lab. The current lower level renovation, featuring the moving of the current computer lab to a new location, will accommodate this desire as resources allow.

The benchmarking aspects of the survey show that student satisfaction with Maucker Union continues to be strong, when compared with other institutions. From this point on, the survey results will be incorporated into the key performance indicator assessment structure being implemented by the Division of Student Affairs as an important source of evidence.