

Portland State University Research Update

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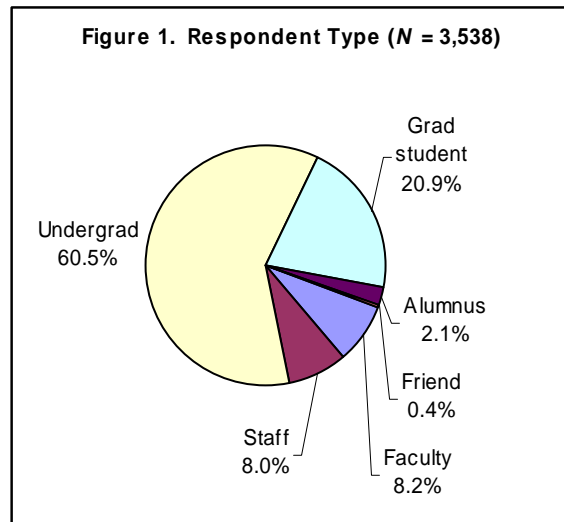
Fall 2005

Portland State Marketing Survey Summary Report

The purpose of the Portland State Marketing Survey was to assess perceptions of Portland State and determine its most distinctive qualities. The survey items covered topics such as Portland State's strengths and the ideas and images most closely associated with the University. All current Portland State faculty, staff, and students received an e-mail message encouraging them to respond to the on-line survey. In addition, the survey was promoted on campus via a flier sent to all campus mailboxes; an announcement in *Currently*; ads in the *Vanguard*; an on-line pop-up request during Web registration; on-line computer terminals at Party in the Park; a feature story on the Portland State Homepage; and an announcement at Faculty Senate and ASPSU Senate.. Survey respondents had the opportunity to enter a drawing for an Ipod as an incentive to complete the survey.

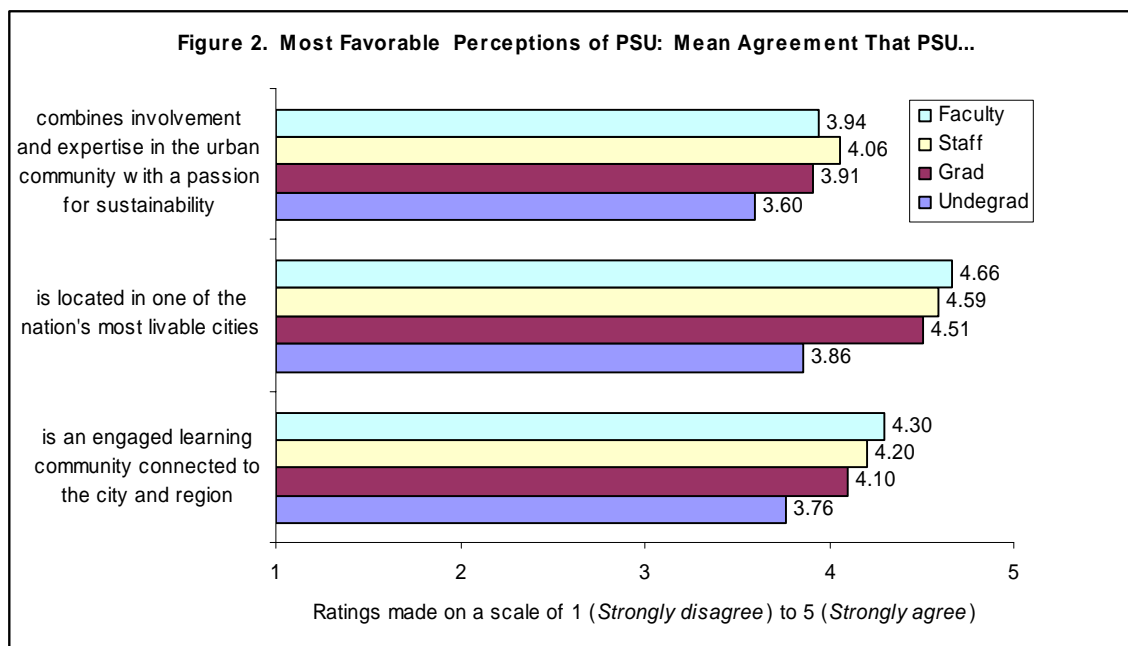
Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents were a convenience sample of 3,538 self-identified students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends. As shown in Figure 1, most respondents were undergraduate and graduate students. Due to the small number of alumni and friends responding to the survey, this report will focus exclusively on the findings for the 3,452 students, faculty and staff in the sample.



Perceptions of Portland State's Strengths

Overall, perceptions of Portland State's strengths were favorable. Respondents rated their agreement with statements about Portland State's strengths on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). As shown in Figure 2, students, faculty, and staff indicated the



highest mean levels of agreement with three statements about Portland State. They agreed that a) Portland State is located in one of the nation's most livable cities, b) Portland State is an engaged learning community connected to the city and region, and c) Portland State combines involvement and expertise in the urban community with a passion for sustainability. Undergraduates were somewhat less likely than the other respondents to agree with these statements.

Respondents disagreed most strongly with the statement "Portland State University attracts uncommonly creative faculty, students, and staff"; however, mean ratings were still somewhat favorable, ranging from 3.17 to 3.54 across respondent types (see Figure 3).

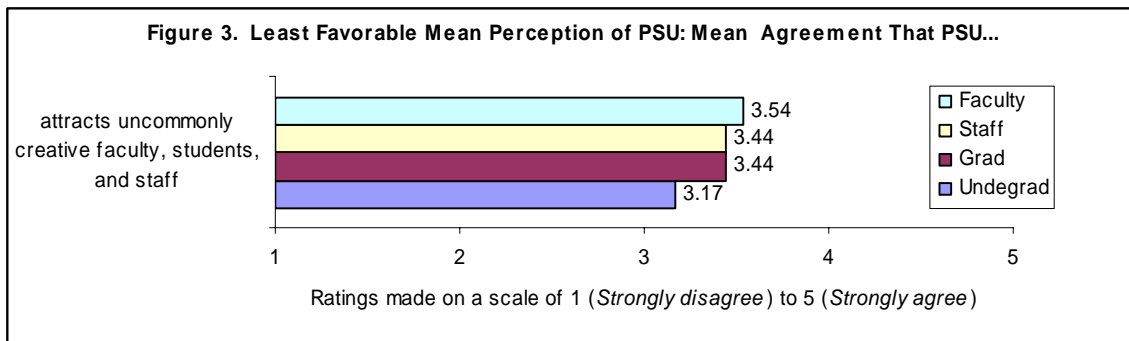
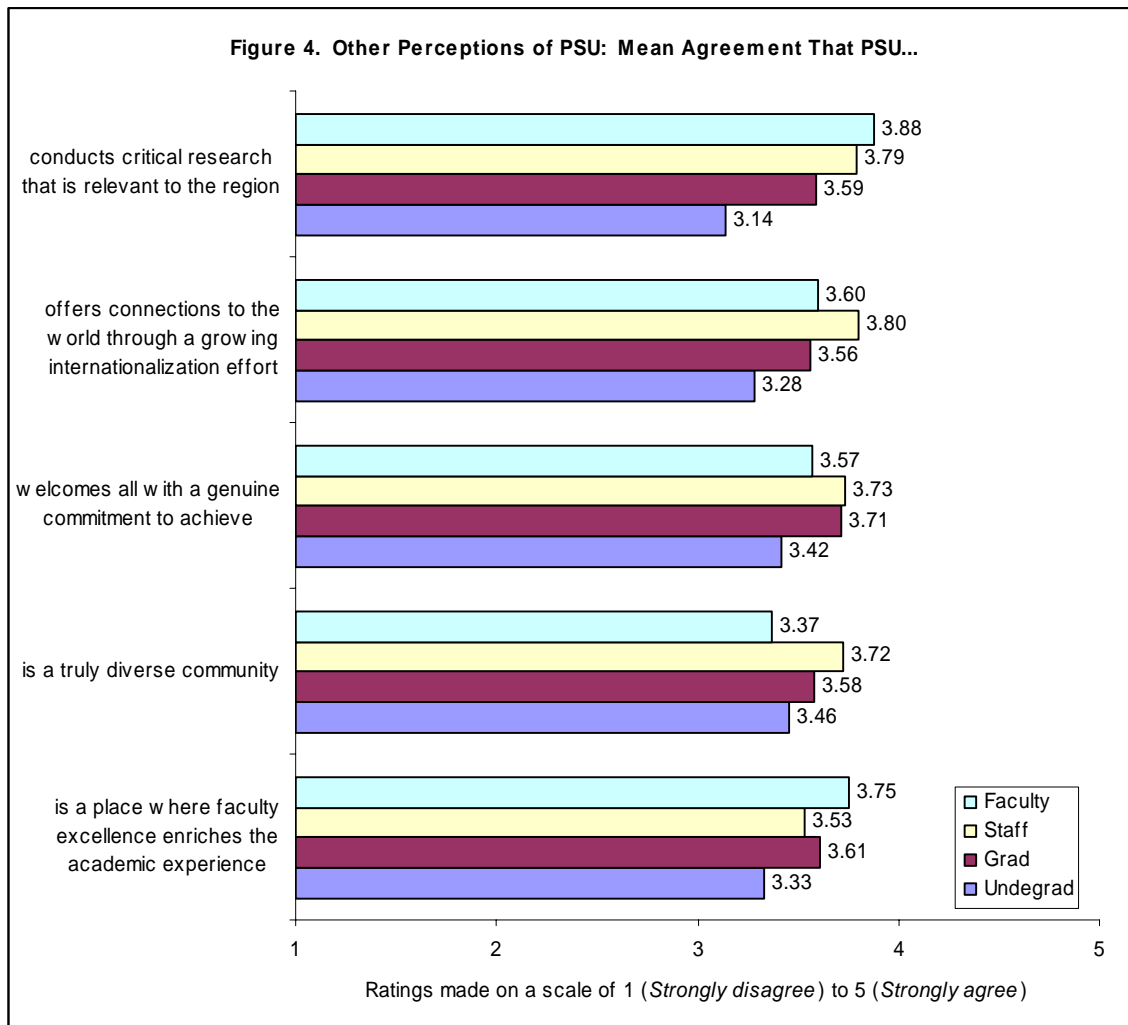


Figure 4 shows respondents' agreement with other statements about Portland State. Respondents' average ratings generally indicated that they were neutral or agreed with the statements about Portland State's strengths.

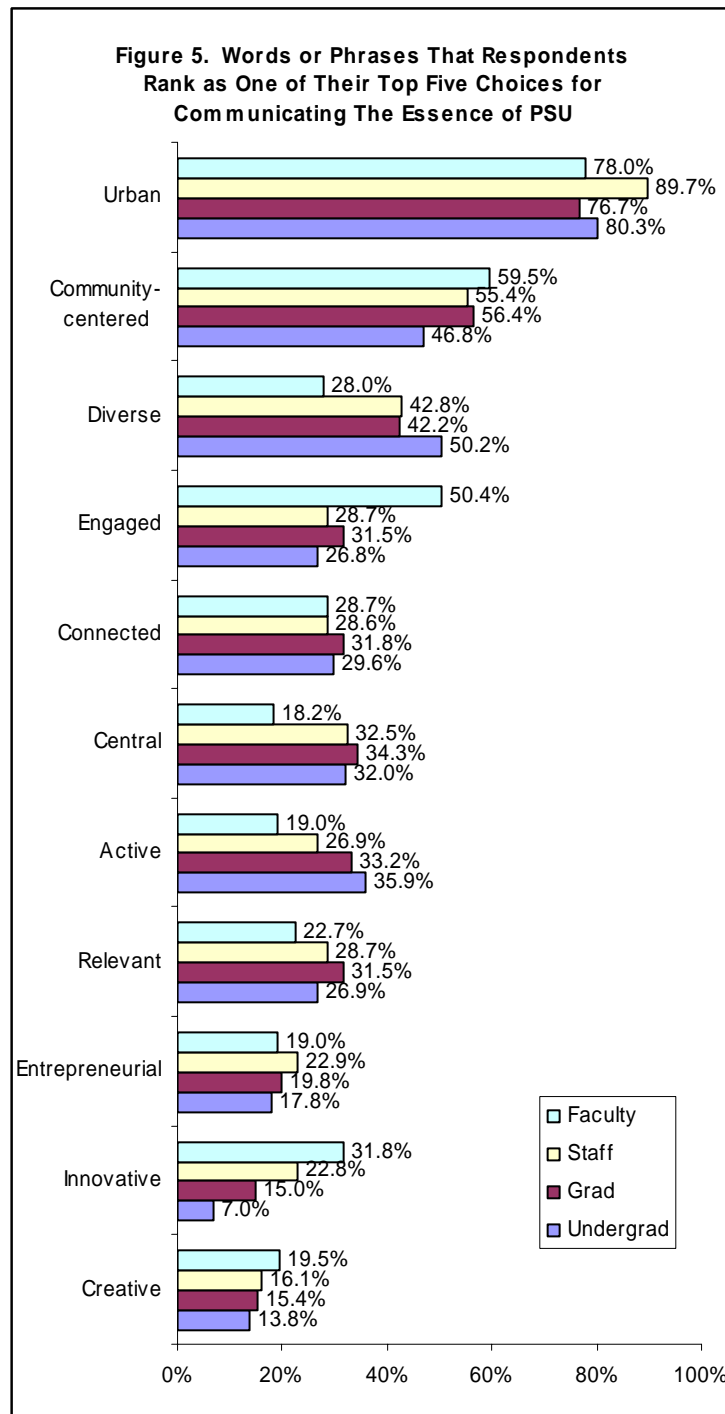


Phrases That Describe Portland State

Respondents were presented with a list of words or short phrases that included “Active”, “Engaged”, “Rigorous academics”, “International”, “Smart”, “Entrepreneurial”, “Innovative”, “Central”, “Urban”, “Diverse”, “Creative”, “Connected”, “Relevant”, “Research”, “Serious”, “Community-centered”, “Integrated”, “Partner”, and “Good neighbor”.

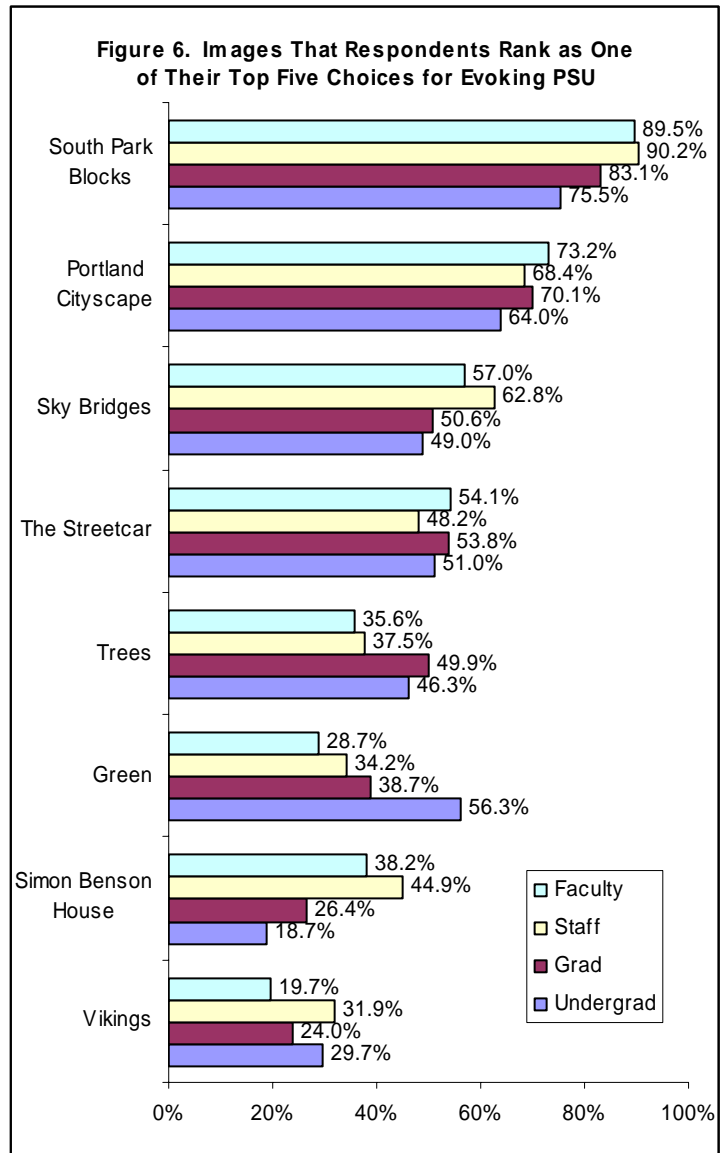
Respondents ranked which five best communicate the essence of Portland State.

The largest proportion of respondents indicated that “Urban” is the word that best describes Portland State. Other descriptors that respondents ranked as highly associated with Portland State included “Community-centered”, “Diverse”, “Engaged”, “Connected” and “Central”. (See Figure 5.)



Images That Describe Portland State

Respondents were presented with a written list of images¹ including “Sky bridges”, “The Simon Benson House”, “The Benson Bubblers”, “South Park Blocks”, “Mount Hood”, “The streetcar”, “Green”, “River,” “Bridges”, “Lincoln Hall”, “Vikings”, “Trees”, and “Portland cityscape”. They ranked which five images they most closely associate with Portland State. The largest proportion of respondents indicated that the image of the South Park Blocks most evokes Portland State. Other images that respondents ranked as highly associated with Portland State included the Portland cityscape and sky bridges. In addition, undergraduates indicated that they associate green and staff indicated that they associate the Simon Benson House with Portland State. (See Figure 6.)



Distinguishing Features of Portland State

The final survey item offered respondents an opportunity to state one feature that sets Portland State apart from other universities. The 2,286 open-ended responses require in depth qualitative analysis beyond the scope of this report; however, a brief summary of frequently named features is included here. Features of Portland State that at least 100 respondents mentioned included the University’s appreciation and acceptance of diversity; extensive commitment to community engagement; its central, urban setting and integration with the city; and the benefits of its location in Portland as a livable city.

¹ The survey presented respondents with a written list to rank—not visual images.

Summary

Respondents identified Portland State's urban mission and location, and its commitment to engaged learning as three of its strengths. They associated the following words and images with what they believed to be the essence of Portland State.

Words That Describe Portland State University

- urban
- community-centered
- diverse
- engaged

Images That Evoke Portland State University

- South Park Blocks
- Portland cityscape
- Skybridges

In addition, respondents indicated that the University's commitment to diversity and community engagement; location in Portland, Oregon; and its urban setting distinguish it from other institutions.

Juliette Stoering and Rowanna Carpenter, Institutional Research Analysts, created this edition of the Portland State University Research Update.