

Priorities Survey for Online Learners

JWU Online – November 2025

Recap of Results

JWU Online administered the Ruffalo Noel Levitz *Priorities Survey for Online Learners (PSOL)* in November, 2025, following previous administrations in April 2023, April 2021, April 2018, April 2017 and May 2016. JWU Online did not administer the survey during spring of 2019 or 2020, as the conversion to semesters and 8-week/16-week courses was taking place during that time.

The PSOL provides an opportunity for an online institution to examine the priorities of its online students as a unique group. The PSOL has been administered by more than 150 institutions each year and completed by approximately 90,000 students over the past three years. The PSOL asks students to respond to 26 statements about online learning with both a level of importance and a level of satisfaction. In addition, JWU-O has defined four additional customized items for the survey, bringing the total items to 30. The data from the survey provides the basis to identify the things that matter to JWU-O's online students and how satisfied these students are with them. With this information, JWU-O can target the specific areas most important to its students to enhance both satisfaction and retention.

Further, by administering the survey repeatedly, progress in increasing student satisfaction can be objectively measured and documented. CPS has had varying results from the multiple survey administrations. Results from the April 2017 survey demonstrated an increase in student satisfaction across all of the items in the survey compared to the May 2016 survey results, while the April 2018 survey results compared to the April 2017 showed small declines for 18 of 26 items, and small increases in the remaining 8 items..

Survey Population

The link to the PSOL instrument was sent on Monday, November 3, 2025, to all 2,327 online students actively registered in the Fall 2025 term, excluding those students who started their online program in Fall 2025 (who may not have had enough experience with the online program to effectively assess many of the questions). The survey closed on Wednesday, November 26, 2025. A total of 469 students (20%) completed the survey, a response rate within the range of previous survey administrations, although on the lower end. The demographics of the 469 responding students were compared with the historical demographics of CPS active students and found to align strongly.

Comparison Group

In addition to providing insight into the satisfaction of JWU Online's students, the PSOL results compare 2025 results to those of a Comparison Group of participating institutions

over the past four years, as well as the previous administration of the survey. That group encompasses approximately 90,000 students from 150 U.S. institutions, including both public and private college and universities offering online education.

Scoring Scale for Items

The PSOL uses a 7-point Likert scale for the 30 importance/satisfaction items, with 1 being the lowest importance or satisfaction level and 7 being the highest importance or satisfaction level. Three additional Summary Satisfaction questions also use a 7-point Likert scale with 1 being the lowest possible response and 7 being the highest.

Demographic Items

The PSOL includes 13 standard demographic items. As noted above, the demographics of the 469 respondents to the survey were compared with the historical demographics of JWU Online's full online population and found to be very similar. Females represent 69% and males 29% of respondents. Fifty-seven percent of respondents attend full-time, and 70% are undergraduate. Most students (62%) are between the ages of 25 and 44. For employment status, 91% of respondents work, with 82% working full-time. Please see the Demographics tab in the PSOL Results Workbook for full detail on demographics of respondents.

Survey Results

There are 26 standard items rated for importance and satisfaction on the PSOL. JWU Online's scores on the 26 items are compared year to year and are also compared to those of the Comparison Group institutions. The four custom items added to the survey cannot be compared to the Comparison Group, as they are unique to CPS. The 26 standard items on the PSOL have been analyzed statistically and conceptually to form five comprehensive scales that are titled Institutional Perceptions, Academic Services, Instructional Services, Enrollment Services, and Student Services. Strengths and Challenges are derived from examining the gaps between the institution's importance and satisfaction scores.

Five Scale Items

The five scale items defined by the PSOL are described below:

- **Academic Services:** assess the services students utilize to achieve their academic goals, including advising, course offerings, technical assistance, online library resources and tutoring services.
- **Enrollment Services:** assesses the processes and services related to enrolling students in the online program, including financial aid, registration and payment procedures.
- **Institutional Perceptions:** assesses how students perceive the institution.
- **Instructional Services:** measures students' academic experience, the instructional materials, the faculty/student interactions, evaluation procedures, and the quality of instruction.

- **Student Services:** measures the quality of student programs and services, including responses to student requests, online career services, and the bookstore.

| Scale | 2023 CPS Satisfaction | 2025 CPS Satisfaction | Comparison Group 2025 | Mean Diff YOY |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Academic Services | 6.01 | 6.18 | 6.09 | 0.17* |
| Enrollment Services | 5.97 | 6.22 | 6.06 | 0.25** |
| Institutional Perceptions | 5.90 | 6.17 | 6.04 | 0.27*** |
| Instructional Services | 5.77 | 5.97 | 6.01 | 0.20* |
| Student Services | 6.02 | 6.14 | 6.00 | 0.12 |

*Significant at 0.05 level

**Significant at 0.01 level

***Significant at 0.001 level

As shown in the chart above, JWU Online’s satisfaction scores for 2025 on the five scale items increased for all five of the scales. Four of the five scales had increases that are statistically significant. The largest increase year over year was in the Institutional Perception scale – a very positive measure of reputation. The satisfaction scores for the levels also improved in four of the five scales.

Strengths

Strengths are items with high importance and high satisfaction, including items above the mid-point in importance (top half) and in the upper 25% of all satisfaction scores. JWU Online’s results cite four strengths, listed in descending order of importance below, three of which were also cited as Strengths in the 2021 survey.

1. Registration for online courses is convenient (Item 18 – consistent Strength)
2. This institution responds quickly when I request information (Item 10 – consistent Strength).
3. Billing and payment procedures are convenient for me (Item 23).
4. My program advisor is accessible by email and telephone (Item 2 – consistent Strength)

Three of four of these Strengths have been consistent Strengths in recent administrations. Item 10 – Billing and payment procedures are convenient for me was a Challenge in the 2023 administration, showing improvement in student perceptions in this area.

Challenges

Challenges are items with high importance and low satisfaction or a large performance gap, including items above the mid-point in importance (top half) and in the lower 25% of all satisfaction scores, or items above the mid-point in importance (top half) and in the top 25% of all performance gap scores. JWU Online’s results cite six challenges, listed in descending order of importance below.

1. Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress (Item 4 – consistent Challenge).
2. Faculty are responsive to student needs (Item 25 – new Challenge)

3. Instructional materials are appropriate for program content (Item 3 – consistent Challenge).
4. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment (Item 6 – consistent Challenge).
5. The quality of online instruction is excellent (Item 20 – consistent Challenge).
6. CPS Item: Faculty provide feedback I can use to improve my learning (Item 28 – consistent Challenge).

Five of the six challenges identified were also listed as challenges in multiple recent surveys. The one new challenge is Item 25 – Faculty are responsive to student needs. These are common areas of dissatisfaction across the institutions that use the PSOL on a regular basis. JWU Online's 2025 scores on these challenges were higher than both the April 2023 survey results and the Comparison Group.

Satisfaction on Survey Items

Another assessment through the PSOL is the comparison of the satisfaction scores of the institution's online students on the 26 survey items to the satisfaction scores of the comparison group students as well as to the prior administration of the survey. Overall, JWU Online's results on the PSOL survey indicate that students perceive the online education provided by JWU Online in ways that are very similar to the perceptions of students in the Comparison Group institutions. For the Fall 2025 administration, 18 of the 26 items (69%) had satisfaction scores that reflected no statistically significant differences from satisfaction scores of the Comparison Group. Within the 26 items, there were 8 items when compared to the Comparison Group that had statistically significant differences, including six items with statistically significant increases in satisfaction and two items with significant decreases.

In the comparison of the survey items to the April 2023 administration of the survey, there were increases in all but one items, including 15 items with statistically significant increases in satisfaction. The one item that has a 0.07 decrease from the April 2023 survey was Item 26 – The bookstore provides timely service to students. The decrease is not statistically significant in this case. Please see PSOL Results Workbook for detail on the survey items.

Summary Questions on Satisfaction

There are three Summary Questions on the PSOL (not part of the 26 scale items) that indicate overall student satisfaction. The third question is the net promoter score question used across many industries as an indication of customer satisfaction. JWU Online saw its overall student satisfaction increase in a statistically significant manner for all three measures of student satisfaction.

1. So far, how has your college experience met your expectations?

| | <u>2023 JWU-O</u> | <u>2023 Comp</u> | <u>2025 JWU-O</u> | <u>2025 Comp</u> |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| What I expected or better | 89% | 91% | 93% | 91% |
| Worse than expected | 11% | 9% | 7% | 9% |
| Average numeric score | 5.25 | 5.10 | 5.43 | 5.28 |

2. Rate your overall satisfaction with your experience here thus far?

| | <u>2023 JWUO</u> | <u>2023 Comp</u> | <u>2025 JWUO</u> | <u>2025 Comp</u> |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Somewhat satisfied or higher | 77% | 82% | 96% | 93% |
| Neutral or dissatisfied | 23% | 18% | 4% | 7% |
| Average numeric score | 5.10 | 5.21 | 6.00 | 5.80 |

3. All in all, if you had to do it over again, would you enroll here again?

| | <u>2023 JWUO</u> | <u>2023 Comp</u> | <u>2025 JWUO</u> | <u>2025 Comp</u> |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Maybe yes or higher | 88% | 93% | 93% | 92% |
| Don't know or no | 12% | 7% | 7% | 8% |
| Average numeric score | 5.70 | 5.93 | 5.96 | 5.93 |

JWU Online saw increases in all the overall satisfaction responses when compared to the 2023 administration and the national norms group. Only one increase was not statistically significant (Question 3 above score of 5.96 compared to national norms group score of 5.93).

Please see PSOL Worksheet Addendum for detail on the survey question responses.

JWU Online Response to PSOL Survey Results

Our JWU Leadership Team is reviewing all of the data related to the Fall 2025 survey administration, including reviewing and summarizing the comments submitted by students (pending from IR). An Action Plan defining 2-3 areas to work on for improvement in satisfaction and retention will be developed and implemented prior to the Spring 2027 administration of the PSOL survey.