



**PARENTS CALLING PARENTS**  
**Dean of Students Office**  
**2008 - 2009**

**SUMMARY**

In November fifteen members of the Parents Council came to campus to participate in the annual Parents Calling Parents Program, where members attempted to call the parents of first-year students. Some of the volunteers also were mailed lists home to call the remaining parents. This report summarizes some of the commentators from parents and statistics gathered through the interviews.

**STATISTICS**

Total number of parents: 482

We phoned 322 parents (67%)

- Didn't reach: 160 (33%)
- Spoke to Parents: 160 (33%)
- Left Message: 133 (28%)
- Didn't leave a message (busy, wrong number, no answering machine etc): 29 (6%)
- 135 (84%) live on campus; 16 (10%) live off campus.

**COMMENTS**

**When Asked About Academics:**

- Most parents (76%) say that their student is doing well academically, that their student is getting the assistance needed, or had no concerns.
- A few parents (16%) were neutral or did not know if their student had concerns.
- A few parents (8%) say that their student is doing poorly, doesn't know their grades, or that they feel their courses and work load are more difficult than expected.

**When Asked About Campus Life:**

- Most students find it very convenient to live on campus, and beneficial to be close to their peers (68%), while a few students had concerns about on-campus life (4%).
- Many students commented specifically about great roommate experiences, though a few said they had concerns about their roommate.
- Some students are enjoying their experience because of involvement outside of the classroom (athletics and other, see statistics).
- A few parents did not know if their student found it convenient to live on campus, or did not leave a comment (28%).

**When Asked About Residential Halls:**

148 parents (91 did not share any specific comments).

- Of the 12 comments shared, 6 (50%) were positive, while 6 (50%) shared concerns or negative experiences.

**When Asked About Dining Service:**

93 parents (58%) did not share any specific comments.

- Of the 117 comments shared, 44 (47%) had positive experiences and 49 (60%) had negative experiences/expressed concerns.
- The concerns mentioned the most were quality and variety of food offered, cost and size of meal plans, hours of HUB operation, J-Term meal plan issues and conflict of athletic practices extending beyond dining hours.
- Some parents commented on lack of vegetarian/vegan options.

**Off-Campus Students/Living in Neighborhood**

- 141 parents (88%) did not answer.
- Of the 19 comments shared, 4 (21%) expressed concerns while 15 (79%) did not.
  - The following concerns were shared: Little commuter programming; struggles academically due to the long commute; and not as much connection to campus.

**When Asked About Commuting:**

- 29 comments were shared.
- 21 (79%) of the parents expressed that their students were meeting people and getting involved on campus.
- 6 (21%) shared that their students were not meeting people/not getting involved.
- 131 (82%) did not answer.

**When Asked About Safety and Security:**

- Most parents say their students feel safe on campus: 126 (79%).
- 19 (12%) of the parents expressed some concern, while 15 (9%) did not answer.
- Some general concerns include walking in the surrounding area at night, parking in the surrounding area, vandalism and events running later on campus.

**When Asked About Student's Enjoyment of University Experience:**

- Good/no concerns: 123 (77%)
  - Campus: 15 (12%)
  - Classes: 10 (8%)
  - Professors: 5 (4%)
  - Sports: 6 (5%)
  - Community: 10 (8%)
  - Dorms: 2 (2%)
  - FYSEM: 2 (2%)
  - Undefined: 73 (59%)
- Bad/concerns: 23 (14%)
  - Food: 11 (48%)
  - Cost: 2 (9%)
  - Homework load: 2 (9%)
  - Professors: 2 (9%)
  - Dorms: 4 (17%)
  - Undefined: 2 (9%)
- Neutral/did not know: 14 (8%)



**When Asked About Student's Involvement/Connections on Campus:**

- Connected: 127 (79%)
- Not connected: 9 (6%)
- Neutral/did not know: 24 (15%)

**Areas of Involvement:**

Based on 116 comments

- Athletics: 44 (38%)
- Residential Life: 14 (12%)
- Friends/Social: 20 (17%)
- Academics: 23 (20%)
- Clubs/Activities: 15 (13%)

**Other Areas Mentioned:**

- Small school environment allowing for participation both inside and outside the classroom has been positive for several students.
- The FYSEM and orientation experiences as positive contributions to social and academic interaction were mentioned specifically several times.
- The commuter lounge, choir and music programs, and work-studies were also cited.
- Athletic involvement includes participation in official Hamline sports as well as intramurals and attendance at athletic events.

**When Asked About Financial Issues:**

- 87 (54 %) stated that they did not have new or ongoing concerns about college expenses.
- 73 (46 %) stated that they did have new or ongoing concerns about college expenses. Of the 49 comments shared, the following concerns were expressed:
  - Unemployment: 2 (3%)
  - Economy: 4 (5%)
  - Tuition cost: 23 (32%)
  - Loan availability: 7 (10%)
  - Financial Aid availability: 10 (14%)
  - 2 or more children in college: 3 (4%)

**Suggestions For Improvements:**

- Reconfigure costs and sizes of meal plans, offer more variety and consider extending hours of dining services.
- Provide students with greater access to assistance/information during the registration process.
- Extend available activities on campus, including weekends.

**Parent Newsletter:**

- Prefer to receive through mail: 61
- Prefer to receive through email: 74