



Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University

Students Survey Report

Students Support and Development Services

Batumi, Georgia
01.05.2013



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1. BACKGROUND

The aim of the report (WP1, Del. 1.2) is to summarize the main findings of the students' survey implemented in the frame of the Students Support and Development Project. The survey was carried out in April 2013 and resulted in receiving the total number of 428 valid (completed) responses. The objective of the survey was to identify specific needs of students in Batumi Shota Rustaveli State University (RSU), specify areas for improvement in students' perceptions of the quality of academic and administrative services provided at the university.

2. METHODOLOGY

The data for the survey was collected through questionnaires. The first draft was written by the University of Suceava, and further forwarded to the member universities for comments and revisions. The final draft was slightly modified (see details in the comments to the respective questions in the *Main Findings* section) to fit the university services, and thus make it more comprehensible for RSU students.

2.1. Survey Sample

The project team selected a random sample of students of the undergraduate and graduate levels, from various faculties of the university (Social Studies, Business, and Law; Education and Sciences; Tourism; Agrarian Technologies and Ecology, Engineering and Technology). This made up the overall sample survey group of 450 students.

2.2. Survey Administration

Before launching the large-scale survey, the questionnaire forms were distributed in the group of 12 students to test the clarity of the questions and address potential shortcomings in the instruction to the questionnaire.

The survey was created in and distributed via the online survey software. There were two survey options: online survey in a campus computer room or via email. The majority of the

students filled in the survey in the computer room, and the remaining part received a questionnaire via email with the request to contribute to the survey and the respective instructions.

2.3. Survey content

The survey addressed the issues like the mission of the university and its accomplishment, academic services and social needs of students (e.g. curricular-related internship, job possibilities, learning skills, students-teachers relations), as well as administrative services.

The questionnaire comprised of two parts: (1) the first part consists of 11 questions and deals with the aspects of higher education; (2) the second part had two questions and concerned the auxiliary services provided at the university. Students were asked to

- (a) prioritize some statements over the others, or
- (b) evaluate a series of statements using either a five-point scale (*very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, indifferent, satisfied, very satisfied*, or 1 being the least and 5 being the most preferable option).

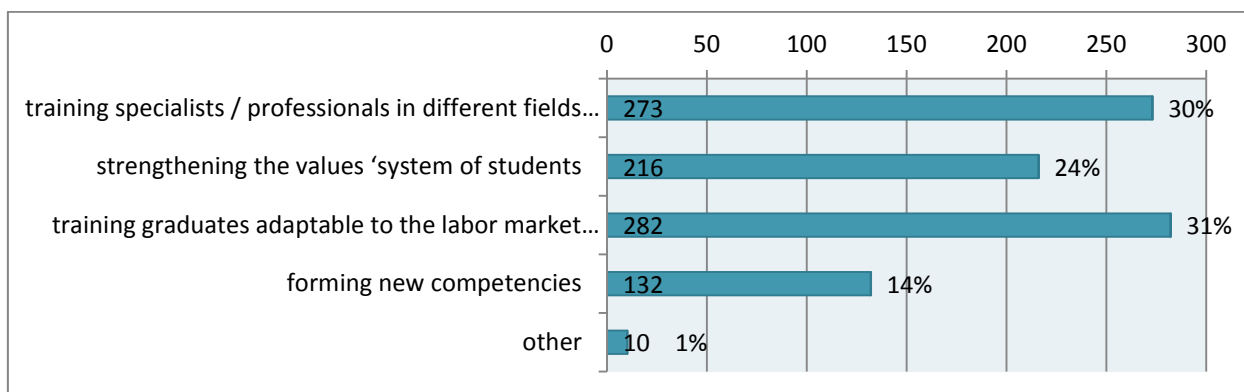
3. MAIN FINDINGS

3.1. Part 1 of the questionnaire:

1. *The main Mission of the University*

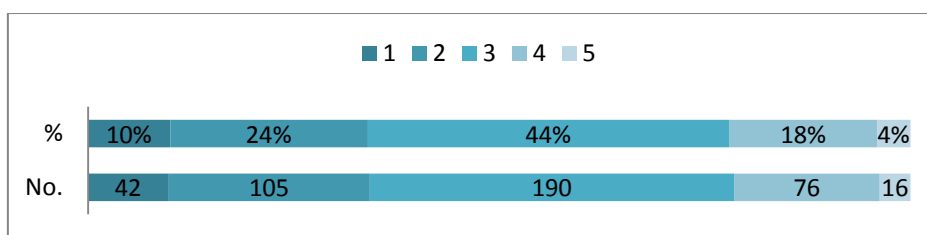
Students prioritized the following two statements with the slightest difference between the two: *'training specialists / professionals in different fields of study'* (30%) and *'training graduates adaptable to the labor market demands'* (31%). The remaining two visions received lower votes landing *'strengthening the values 'system of students'* and *'forming new competencies'* with 24% and 14% respectively.

Note: all tables below show the data in number of votes made by students and percentage.

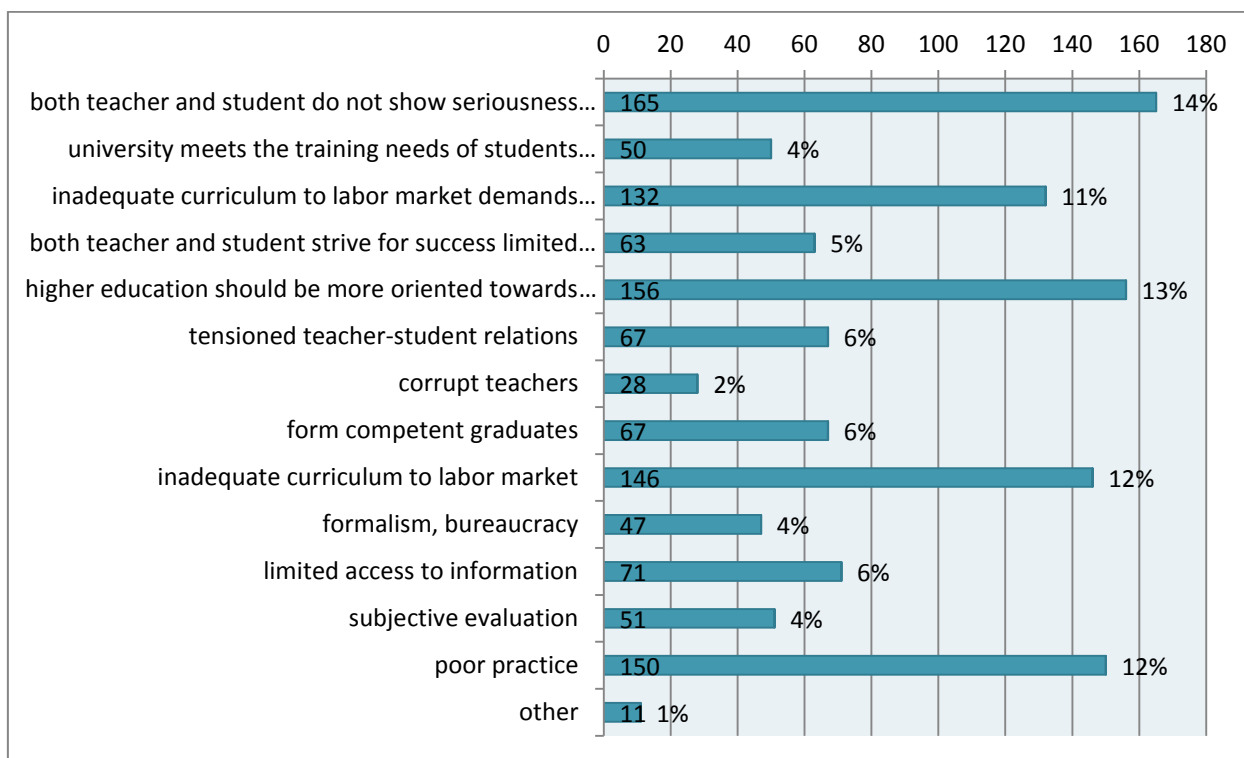


2. Accomplishment of the university mission and the reason for it

Students gave the average evaluation to the level of the mission accomplishment. On a scale from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest score), most students (44%) indicated 3, while 1 and 5 got the lowest votes (41% and 4% respectively).



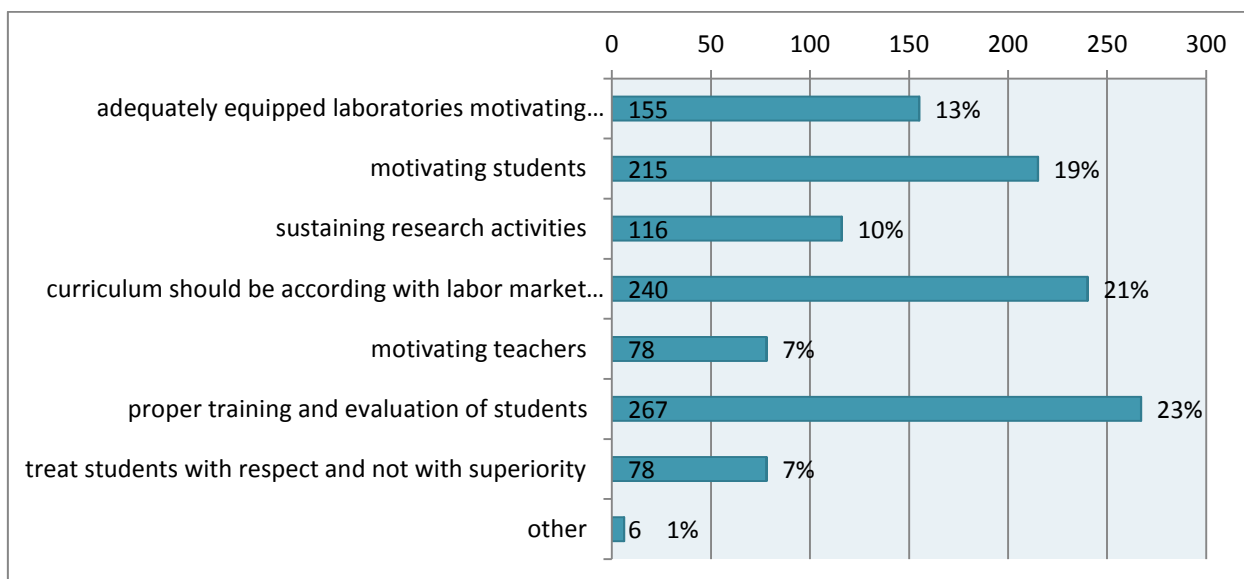
As for the reasons for this, 'the leaders', with mostly equally distributed highest scores, were 'both teacher and student do not show seriousness' (14%), 'higher education should be more oriented towards meeting the students' needs' (13%), 'inadequate equipment of university' (12%), 'poor practice' (12%), 'inadequate curriculum to labor market demands' (11%). The remaining reasons scored between 1% and 6%.



3. The way to accomplish the mission

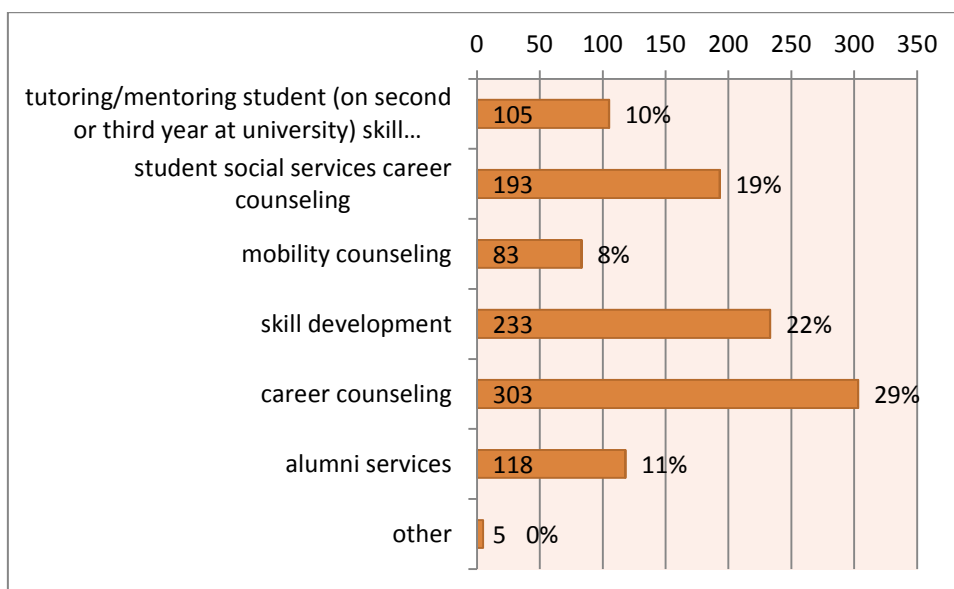
For quality of assessment, students are most likely to agree with the statements *'proper training and evaluation of students'* (23%), *'curriculum should be according with labor market demands'* (21%), and *'motivating students'* (19%); less agreement lies with *'adequately equipped laboratories'* (13%), *'sustaining research works'* (10%), *'motivating teachers'* (7%), *'treat students with respect and not with superiority'* (7%).

Following the example of Ilia State University, *'sustaining research works'* replaced the original *'entrance/admission examination, not selection of files'* since the latter is not in place in Georgia, and could have been misinterpreted by students; thus, it was replaced by a statement, which in our opinion was worth of finding out students' opinion.



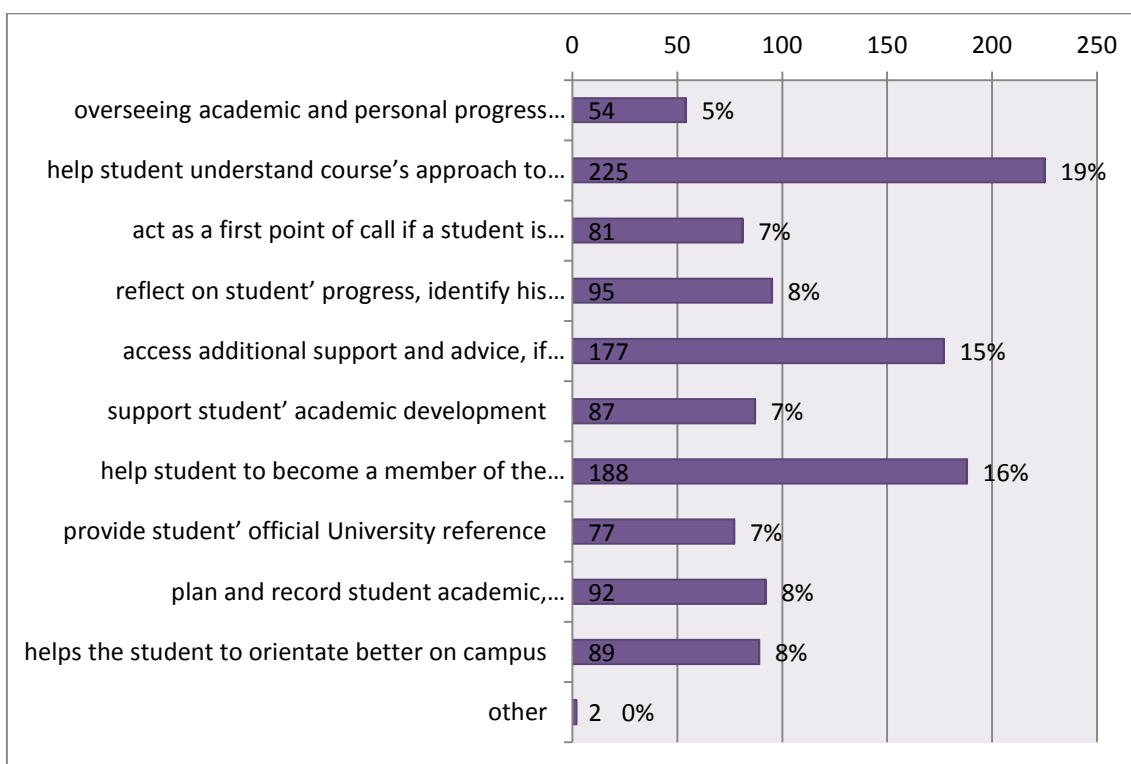
4. University services to meet training academic needs

The responses to this questions showed that most students feel strong need for 'career counseling' (29%), followed by 'skill development' (22%), 'student social services' (19%), 'alumni service' (11%), 'tutoring/mentoring student (on second or third year at university)' (10%), and 'mobility consulting' (8%).



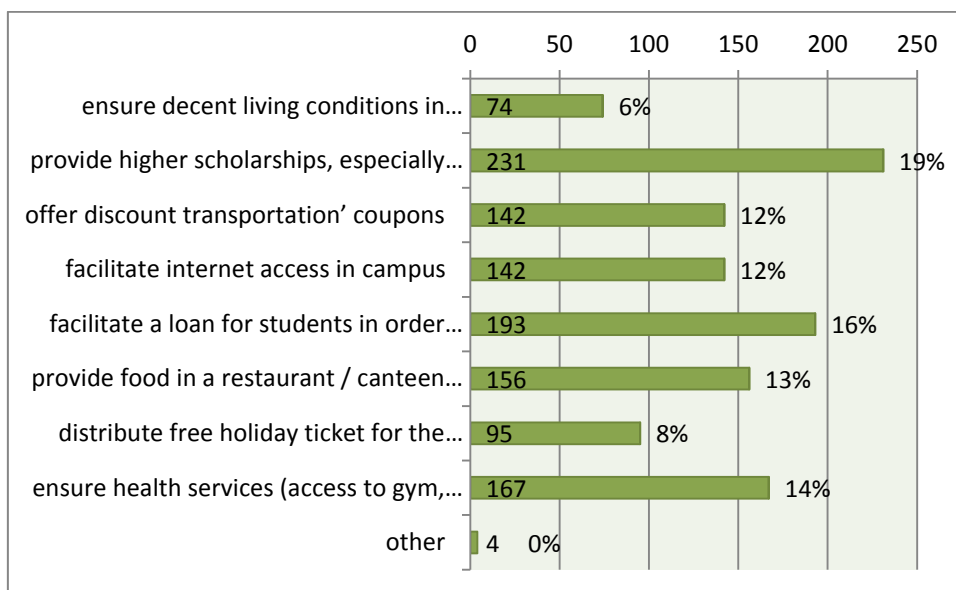
5. Tutor student's role

In fact, there is no such a thing like tutor students in RSU. However, most students are familiar with this notion and others had it explained in the instructions to ensure the adequate response. Among the functions tutor students may professionally supply in the future 'help student understand course's approach to learning, skills development and assessment' (19%) ranked highest compared to 'help student to become a member of the University community and make the transition into Higher Education' (16%) and 'access additional support and advice, if student need to' (15%); the remaining services scored relatively low (ranging between 5% and 8%).



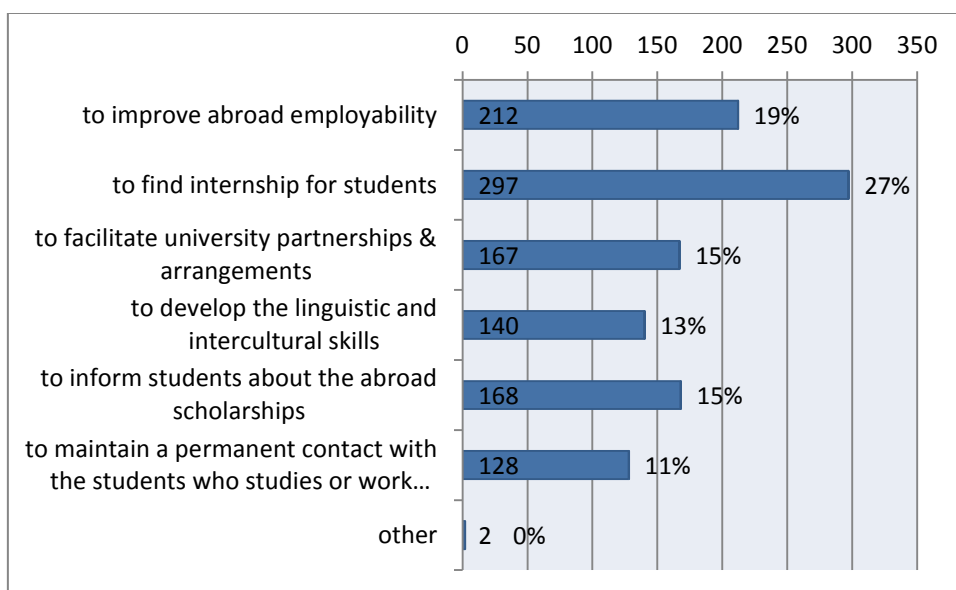
6. Social services to support students

With some difference in votes, nearly all social services appeared to be valued by students; however 'ensure decent living conditions in campus' and 'distribute free holiday ticket for the best students' ranked significantly low with only 6% and 8% respectively.



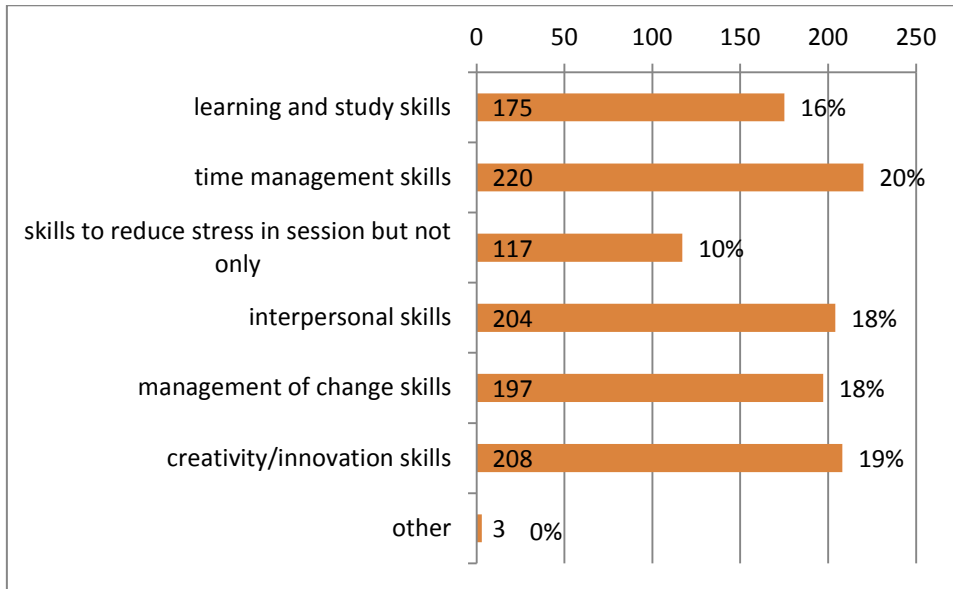
7. Main objective of a mobility centre

Similarly to the previous issue, all objectives listed for the career centre seemed nearly equally important to students; however, the obvious priority for them was improvement in the 'internship' (27%).



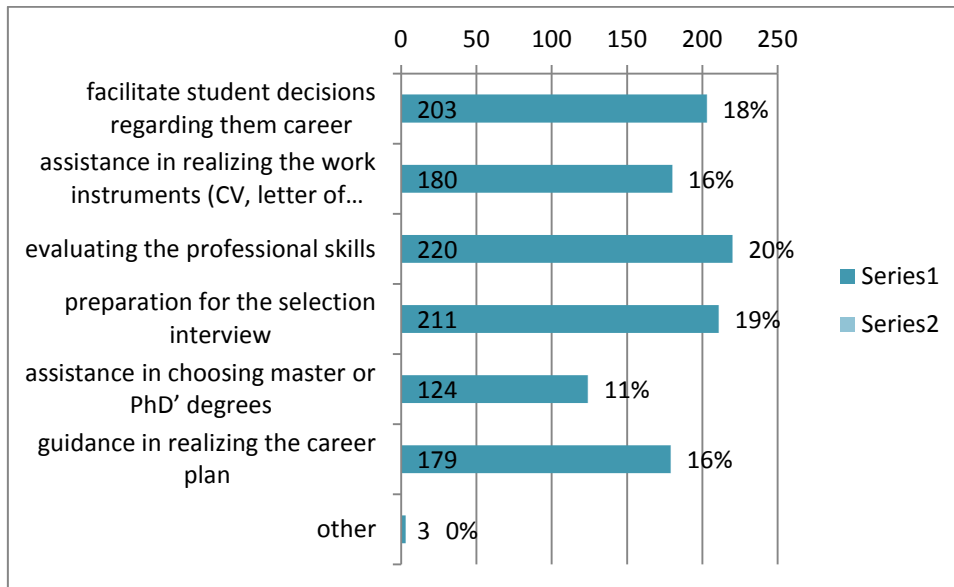
8. Professional and personal skills to be developed with assistance of the counseling

According to the responses from students, they see *'time management skills'* (20%) as the weak point to be enhanced, closely followed by *'interpersonal'* (18%), *'creative/innovation'* (18%), *'management of change'* (17%), and *'learning skills'* (16%), while *'stress reduction skills'* (10%) tangles at the end of the priority list.



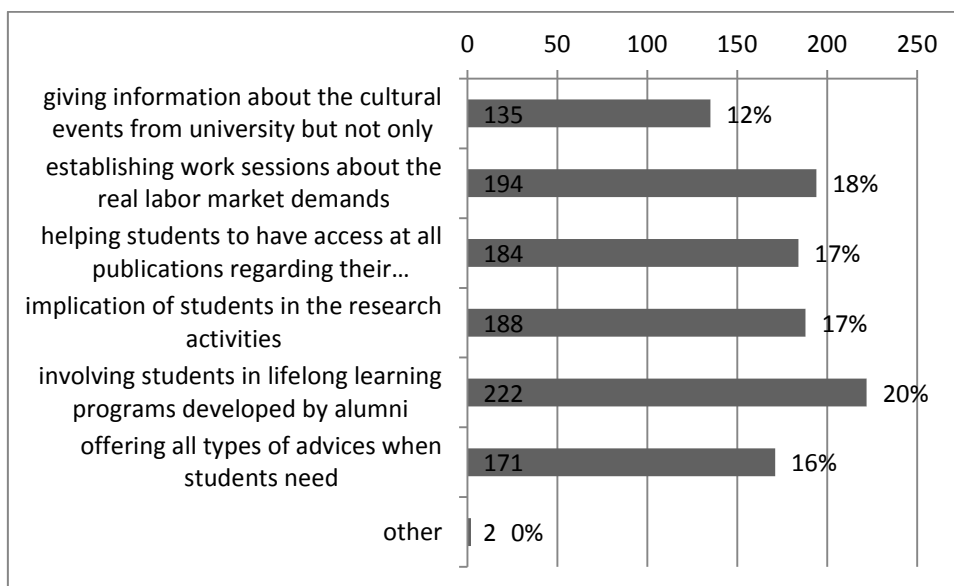
9. Main tasks of the career counseling centre

Students' opinion is that *'professional skills development'* should be the main task of the career counseling centre (20%); in comparison, the other tasks received slightly fewer votes: *'preparation for the selection interview'* (19%), *'facilitate student decisions regarding their career'* (18%), *'assistance in realizing the work instruments (CV, letter of intent, motivation letter)'* (16%), *'guidance in realizing the career plan'* (16%), with *'assistance in choosing master/PhD degree'* being the least important.



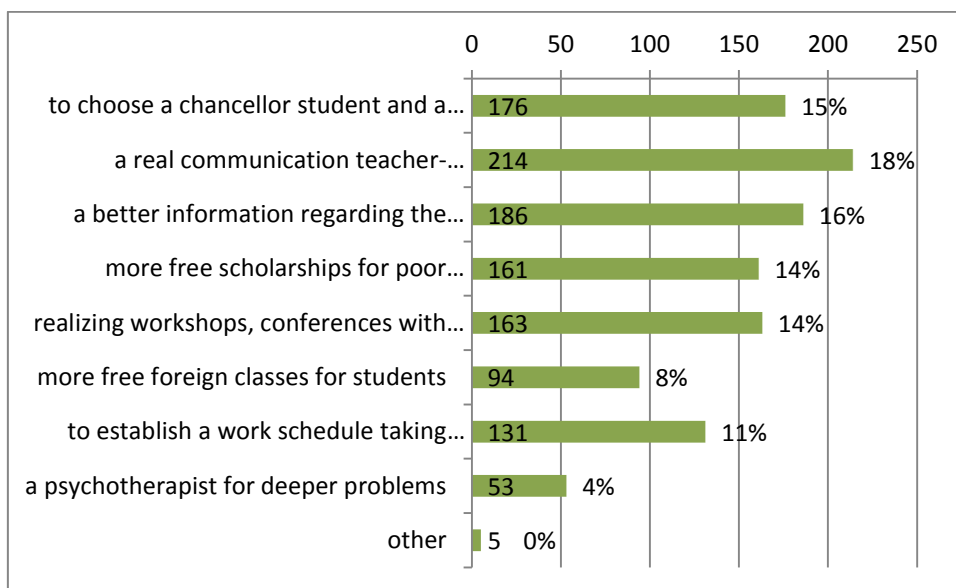
10. Alumni Centre assistance

Similar to the 'tutor student' issue, the alumni centre/relations is not in place, but more or less known to students; therefore, the responses in this section are the students' speculations about the possible situation in the future. The response demonstrated the students' trust in graduates' experience when the majority selected *'involving students in lifelong learning programs developed by alumni'* (20%), but considered *'giving information about the cultural events from university but not only'* (12%) the least important. The remaining services share the similar scores: *'establishing work sessions about the real labor market demands'* (18%), *'helping students to have access at all publications regarding their professional interests'* (17%), *'implication of students in the research activities'* (17%), and *'offering all types of advices when students need'* (16%).



11. Other services to satisfy students' needs

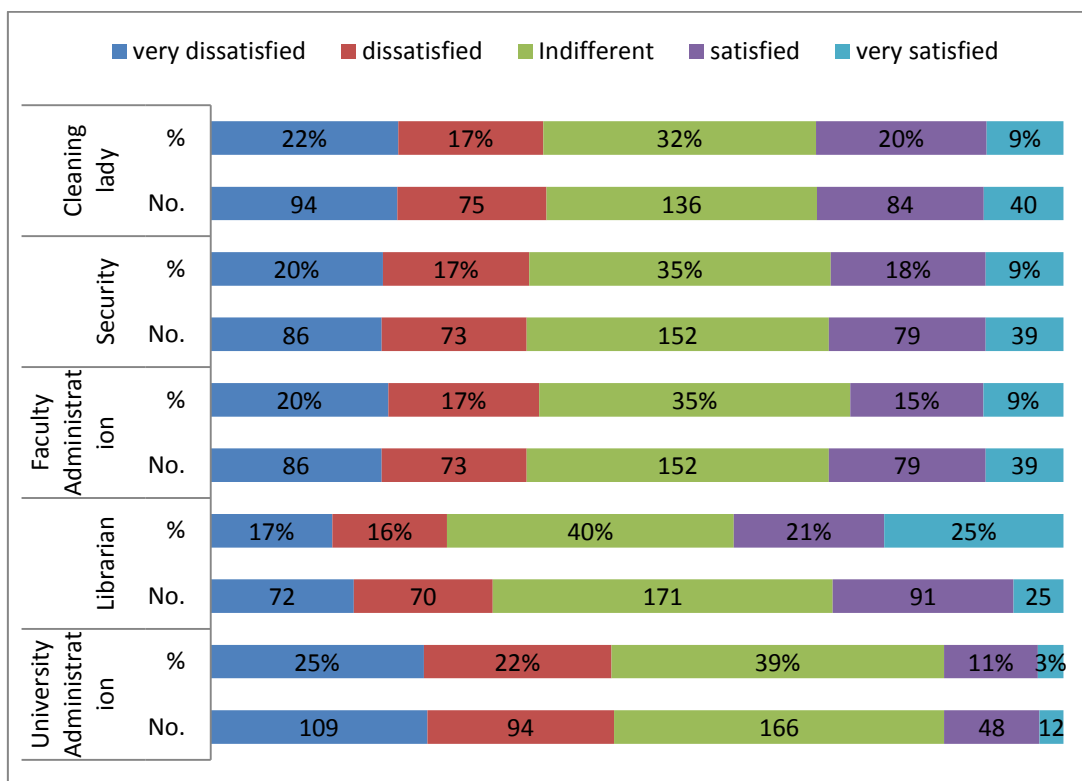
Students obviously view communication as a major shortcoming in need of improvement – ‘a real communication teacher-students, representatives of the university-students’ was selected as a priority by 18%; less but still problematic are ‘a better information regarding the events organized in the university’ (16%), ‘choosing a chancellor student and a senator student which must defend the students’ rights in senate’ (15%), ‘realizing workshops, conferences with the employers from the labor market’ (14%), ‘more foreign classes for students’ (14%), ‘more free scholarships for poor students’ (11%), ‘work schedule’ (8%), and ‘a psychotherapist for deeper problems’ as the least matter of concern with only 4%.



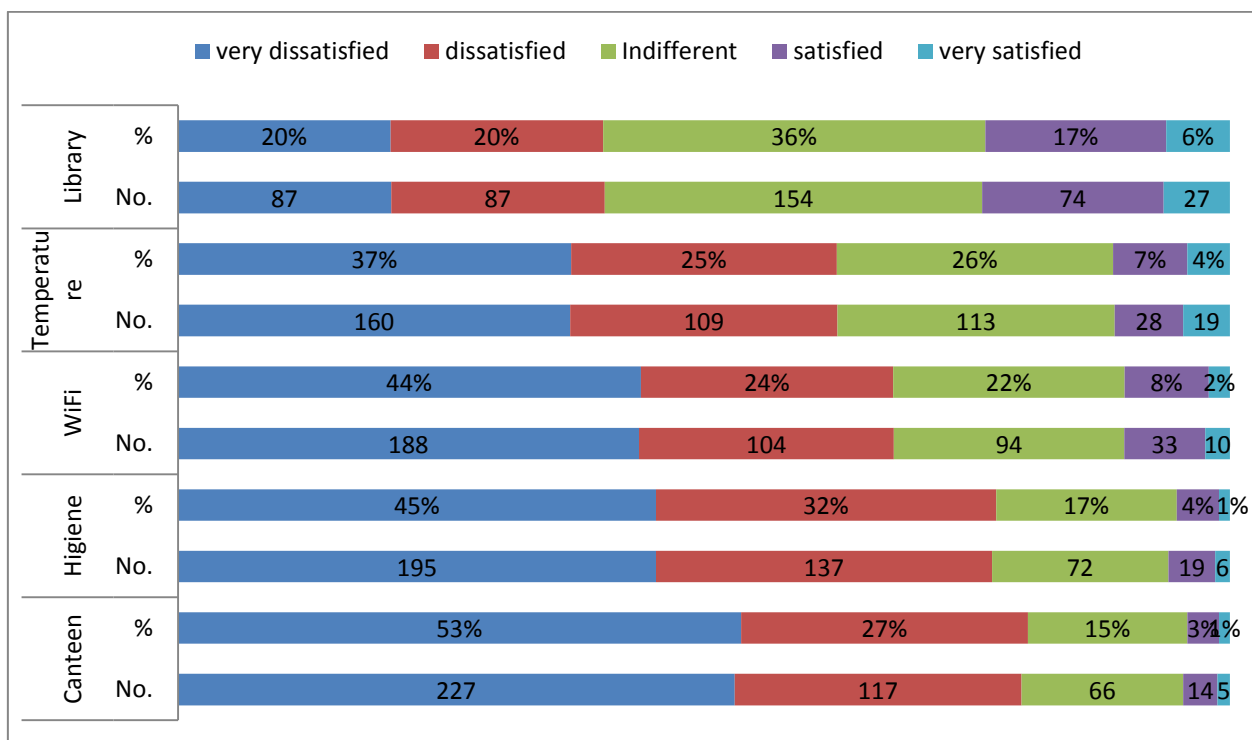
3.2. Part 2 of the questionnaire

In the second part of the questionnaire students responded to two questions related to (1) the set of 'non-academic' services delivered by the university administration; and (2) the university facilities.

On average, students remained 'neutral' in their evaluation of all services: university administration (included in the questionnaire instead of an initial 'a secretary', since this service is provided by a secretariat', i.e. the staff of the university administration office), librarian, faculty administration, security (instead of 'a porter' as in the first draft of the questionnaire), and cleaning lady all had from 31% to 40% as neutral; relatively fewer students indicated 'dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied', and even lower number of students chose 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied'.



As for the facilities, we made one change in the initial question. 'Coffee machine' that is not in place was substituted with 'canteen'. The chart below explicitly shows that the most desired facility to be improved, as selected by the majority of the students, was in fact 'canteen'; the other greatest dissatisfactions were lack of the WiFi on the university grounds, some hygienic issues, and heating/conditioning; students were more likely to be satisfied with the library, with the majority indicating satisfied and neutral as their first choice.



ANNEXES