

Life in the Loop

A Look at the Student Experience in the Nation's First Multi-Institutional Downtown Dorm

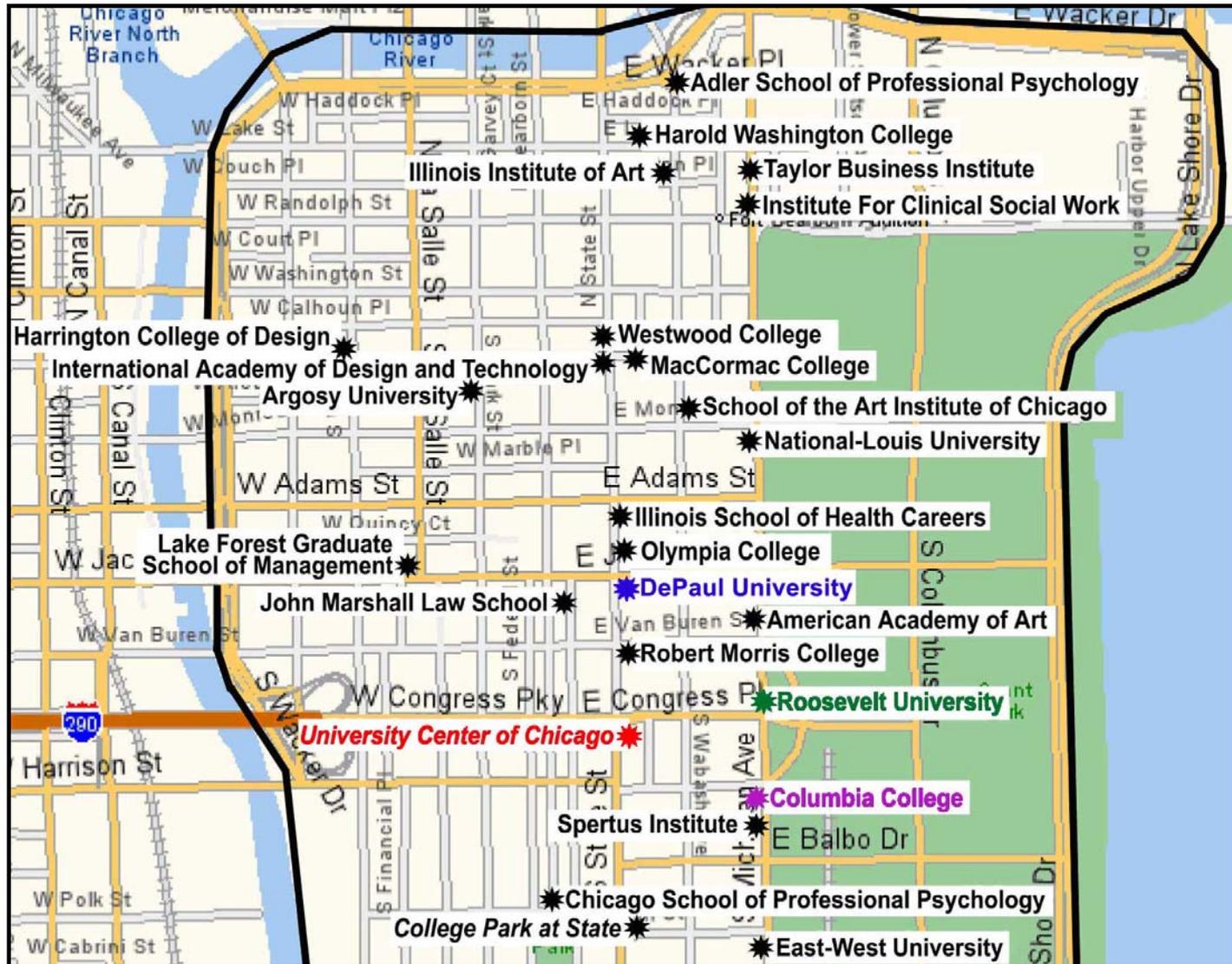
Laura Kehoe
Roosevelt University

Elizabeth Silk
Columbia College Chicago

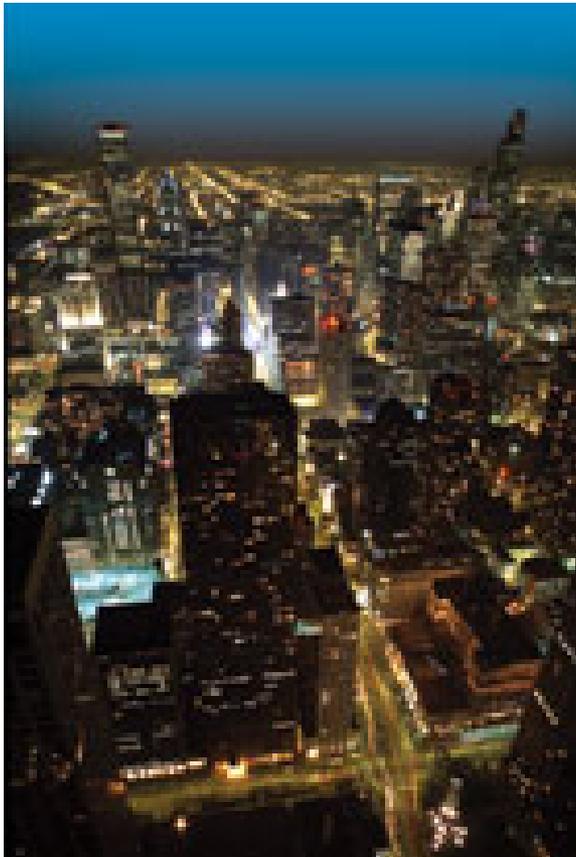
Liz Sanders
DePaul University

Joseph W. Filkins
DePaul University

Loop/South Loop is Illinois' largest college town



Loop/South Loop is Illinois' largest college town



Loop/South Loop is Illinois' largest college town

- 21 college and universities
- enrolling a total of 52,230 college students
- a total of 3,789 residential beds currently
- 7.5 million total square feet – 2 times the Sears Tower

The University Center



- Opened in fall 2004
- 18 stories, 1,732 beds
- guaranteed housing
- apartments and suites
- health club facility
- cafeteria
- security

The University Center

“Quintessentially urban”



The University Center

- Columbia:
 - UC houses 803 total students (99% undergraduate)
 - 1,204 other downtown residents in 4 halls
- Roosevelt:
 - UC houses 299 total students (88% undergraduate)
 - 195 other downtown residents in 1 hall
- DePaul:
 - UC houses 452 total students (94% undergraduate)
 - 2,662 other residents in 14 halls at Lincoln Park

Value of living on campus

- Identified as one of the most important determinants of academic and social integration into institutional culture and a key factor in student recruiting and persistence.
 - Students recall their residence hall experiences more vividly than most other aspects of their college experience (Schimm, 2001).

Value of living on UC campus

- Students from three different institutions living together was expected to build a new community
- Built across college boundaries, between students from all three schools

Value of living on UC campus

- "The collaboration among our institutions has created a unique opportunity for our students to get to know and socialize with students from more than one school."
 - Charles R. Middleton
Roosevelt University President
- Create a “fourth culture” different from each of the individual institutions, the campus community of the Loop college town

Purpose of this study

- Examine the quality of life experienced by students in the South Loop
- Assess the UC experience and the emergence of the 'fourth culture'
- Evaluate perceptions of campus community

Methodology

- Sixty-two item questionnaire addressed issues of social engagement, physical environment and student support services
 - **Section 1:** Satisfaction with physical and social environment
 - **Section 2:** Gauge feelings of engagement and belongingness
 - **Section 3:** Satisfaction with services, amenities, rules & regulations
 - **Section 4:** Frequency of participation in activities & services

Methodology

- Administered on-line to all 4,957 residence hall students at the three colleges
 - Hosted online by DePaul's Office of Institutional Research
 - Three survey versions, with separate login page, allowed institutions to ask additional questions of their students only
 - Students input their ID, to allow retrieval of demographics from university databases

Methodology

- Survey Administration
 - Each institution administered its own invitations and reminders.
 - Different academic calendars necessitated different field dates.
- Responses were received from 735 students, yielding a total response rate of 14.8%

Methodology

Survey Response Rates by College and Residence Hall

	<u>UC</u>			<u>Non-UC</u>			<u>Total</u>		
	<u>Total Pop.</u>	<u>Respondents</u>		<u>Total Pop.</u>	<u>Respondents</u>		<u>Total Pop.</u>	<u>Respondents</u>	
	(n)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(n)	(%)
Columbia	716	103	14.39	736	126	17.12	1,452	229	15.77
Roosevelt	297	55	18.52	96	22	22.92	393	89	22.65
DePaul	585	61	10.43	2,527	341	13.49	3,112	417	13.40
Total	1,598	219	13.70	3,359	489	14.56	4,957	735	14.83

Results

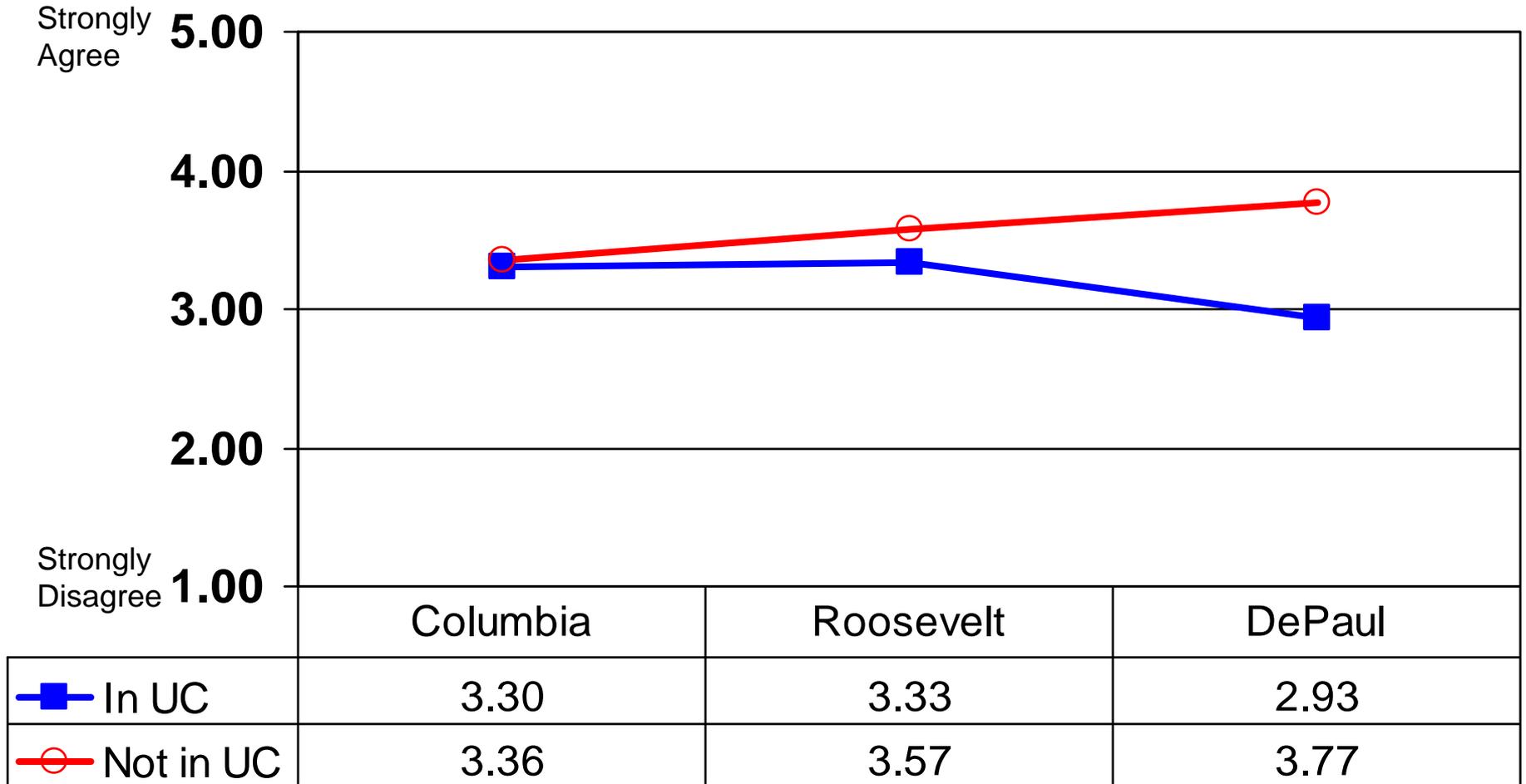
- 2 (UC vs. Non-UC) x 3 (institution) analysis of variance
- Three areas of interest
 - South Loop Life
 - The “Fourth Culture”
 - Campus Life & Belongingness

Results: South Loop Life

- Four items relating to availability of activities and personal safety
 - 1) There are things to do during the weekends.
 - 2) There are places to go nearby where I can meet with friends.
 - 3) I feel safe walking in my residence hall's neighborhood at night.
 - 4) How satisfied are you with your residence hall's location?

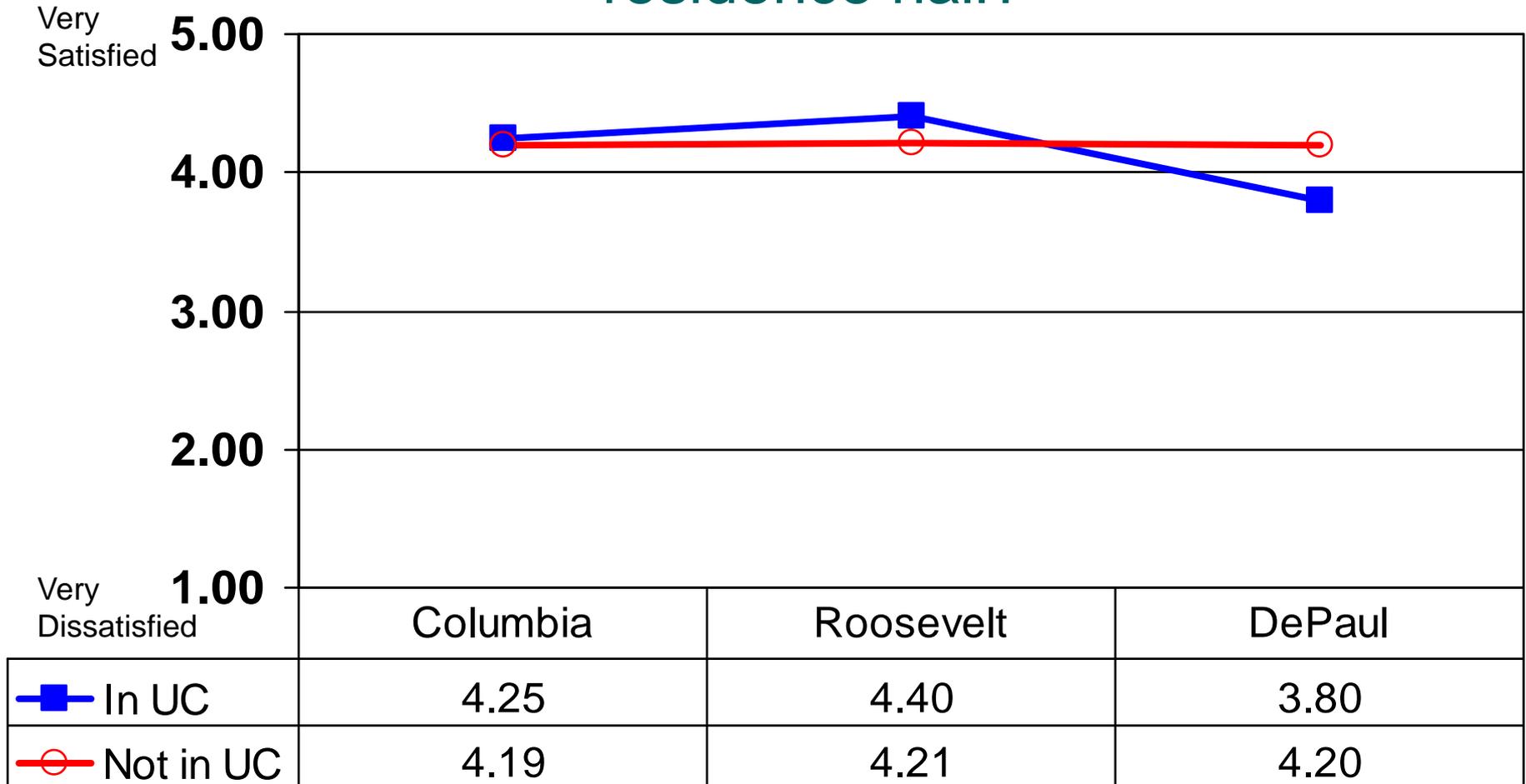
Results: South Loop Life

I feel safe walking in my neighborhood at night



Results: South Loop Life

How satisfied are you with the location of your residence hall?



Results: South Loop Life

- DePaul students in the UC were less satisfied and felt less safe than DePaul students living in Lincoln Park and Roosevelt and Columbia students living in the loop:
 - “[living in UC] made it difficult to make friends in Lincoln Park.” (DePaul UC Resident)

Results: South Loop Life

- Conversely, location was most often cited by Columbia and Roosevelt as something they liked most about their residence hall, both for UC and non-UC residents.
 - “I have become accustomed to the city in a ‘safe’ environment” (Columbia UC resident)
 - “It is a close walking distance to school” (Roosevelt UC resident)

Results: The Fourth Culture

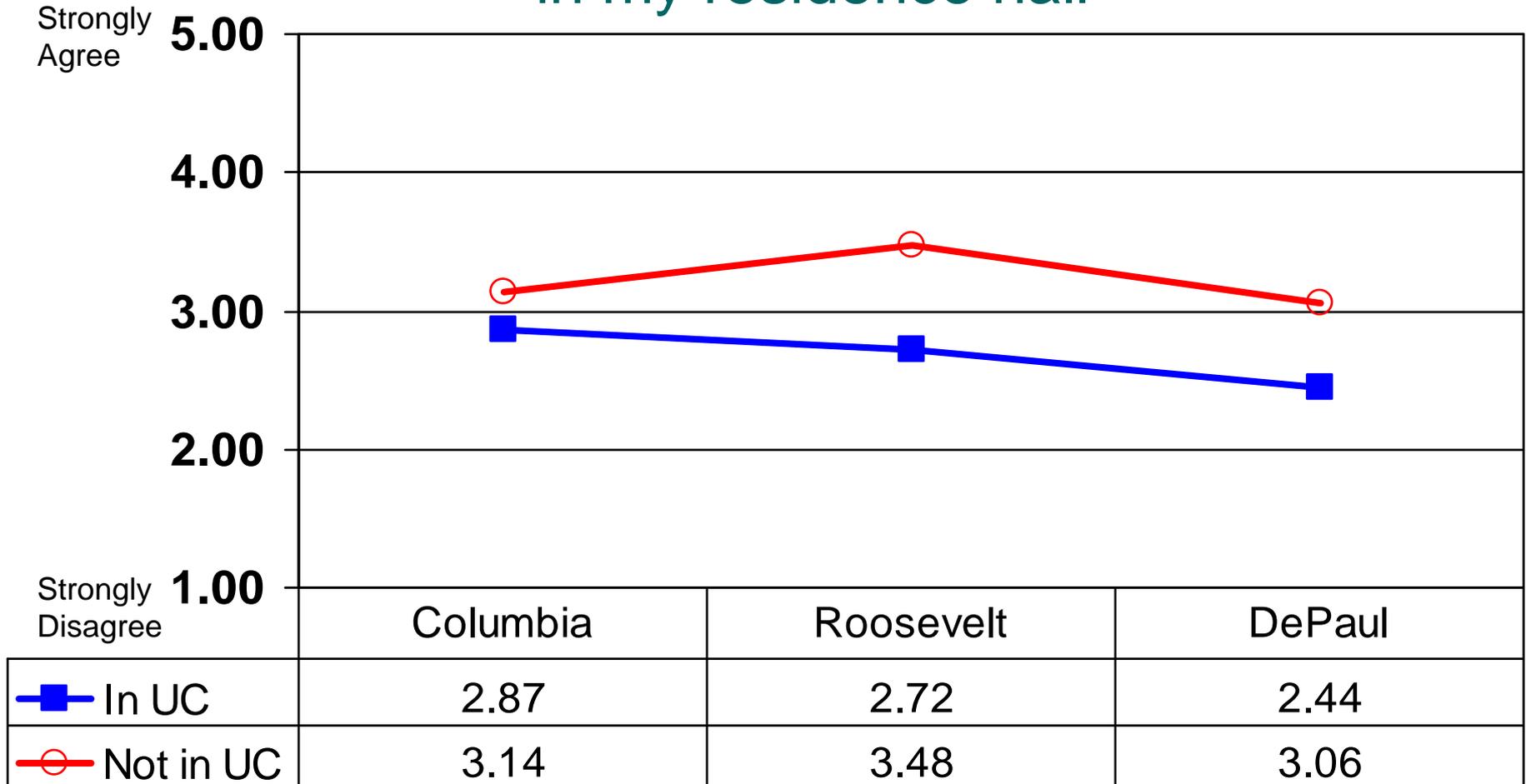
- Nine items asking about feelings of community at UC:
 - 1) I feel a part of the community in my residence hall.
 - 2) I have made an effort to get to know students who attend my school.
 - 3) I have made an effort to get to know students who attend other schools.
 - 4) I have made friends with other residents of my residence hall who attend my school.

Results: The Fourth Culture

- Nine items asking about feelings of community at UC:
 - 5) I have made friends with other residents of UC who attend the other schools.
 - 6) Within my residence hall, there is a feeling of unity among students from my school.
 - 7) Within the UC, there is a feeling of unity among residents across all the schools.
 - 8) I like living with students from other universities.
 - 9) How satisfied are you with your residence halls sense of community?

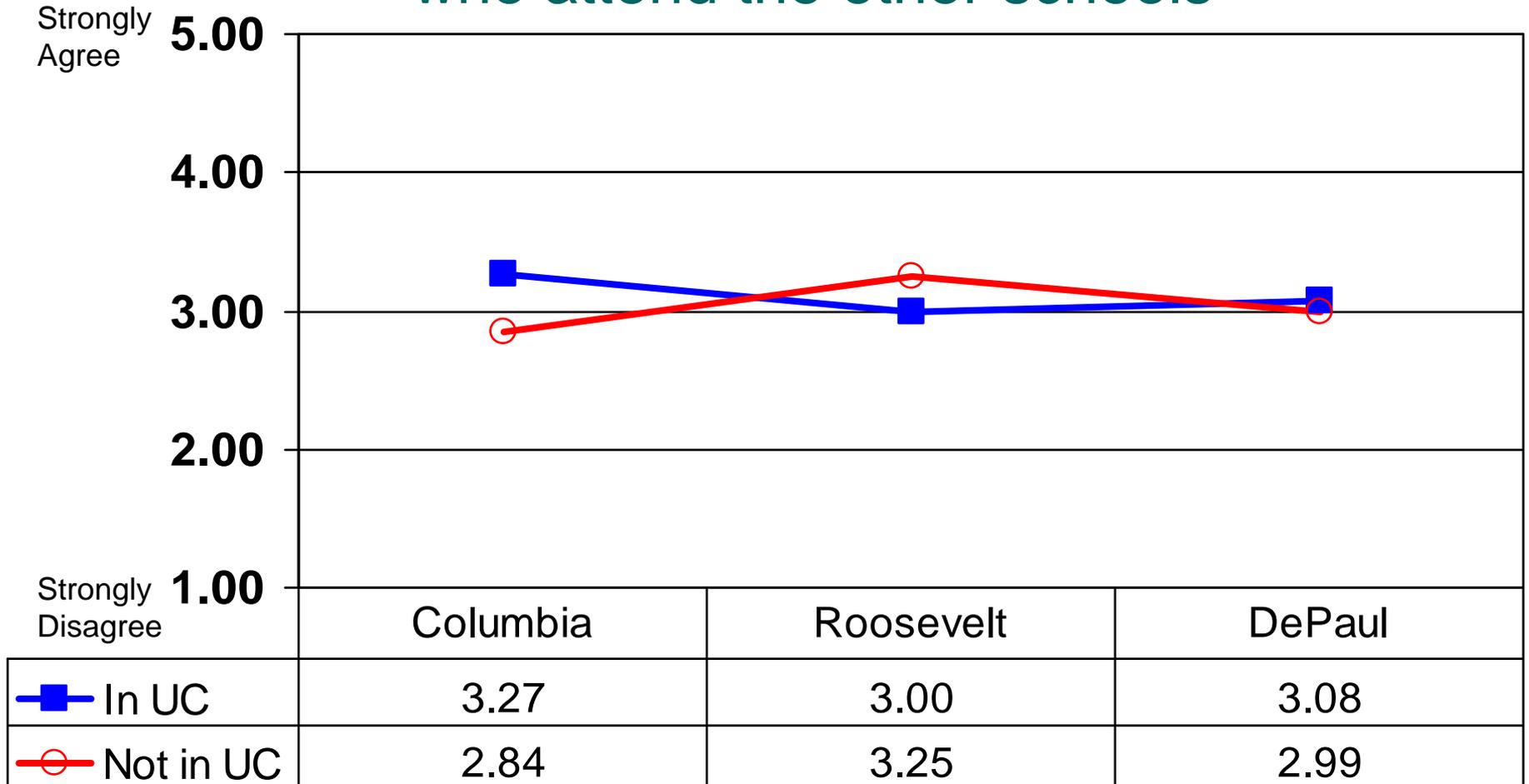
Results: The Fourth Culture

I feel like a part of the community
in my residence hall



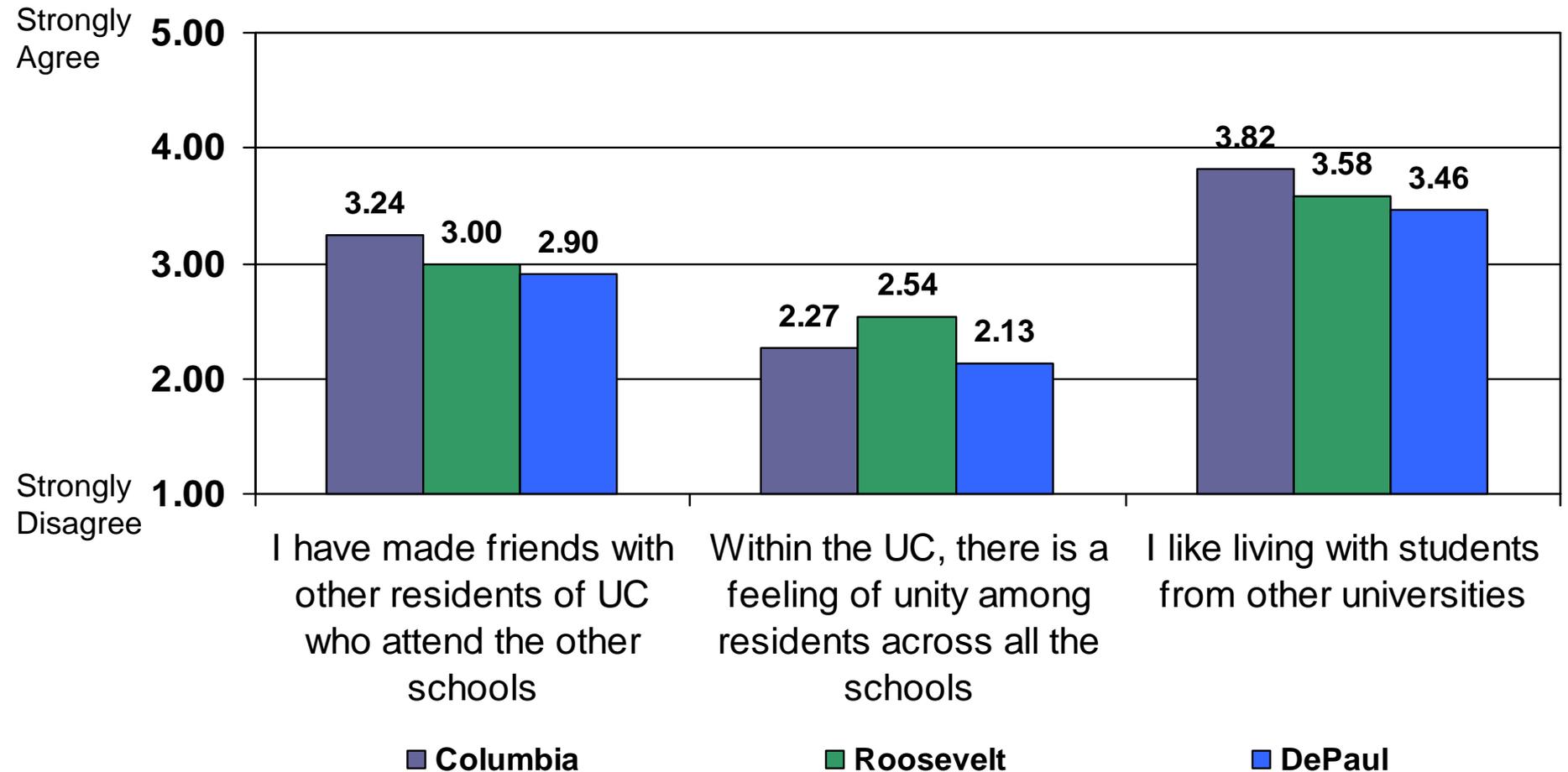
Results: The Fourth Culture

I have made an effort to get to know students who attend the other schools



Results: The Fourth Culture

Cross-Institution Comparisons on Sense of Residence Hall Unity



Results: The Fourth Culture

- Though the sense of community seems to be lacking at the UC, many students expressed the desire for better, more integrated experiences between students from the different schools.
 - “I would like to be able to share a room with the people from DePaul or Columbia ...however, it is not possible. That should be changed to increase the unity of the three schools.” (Roosevelt UC Resident)

Results: Sense of Belonging

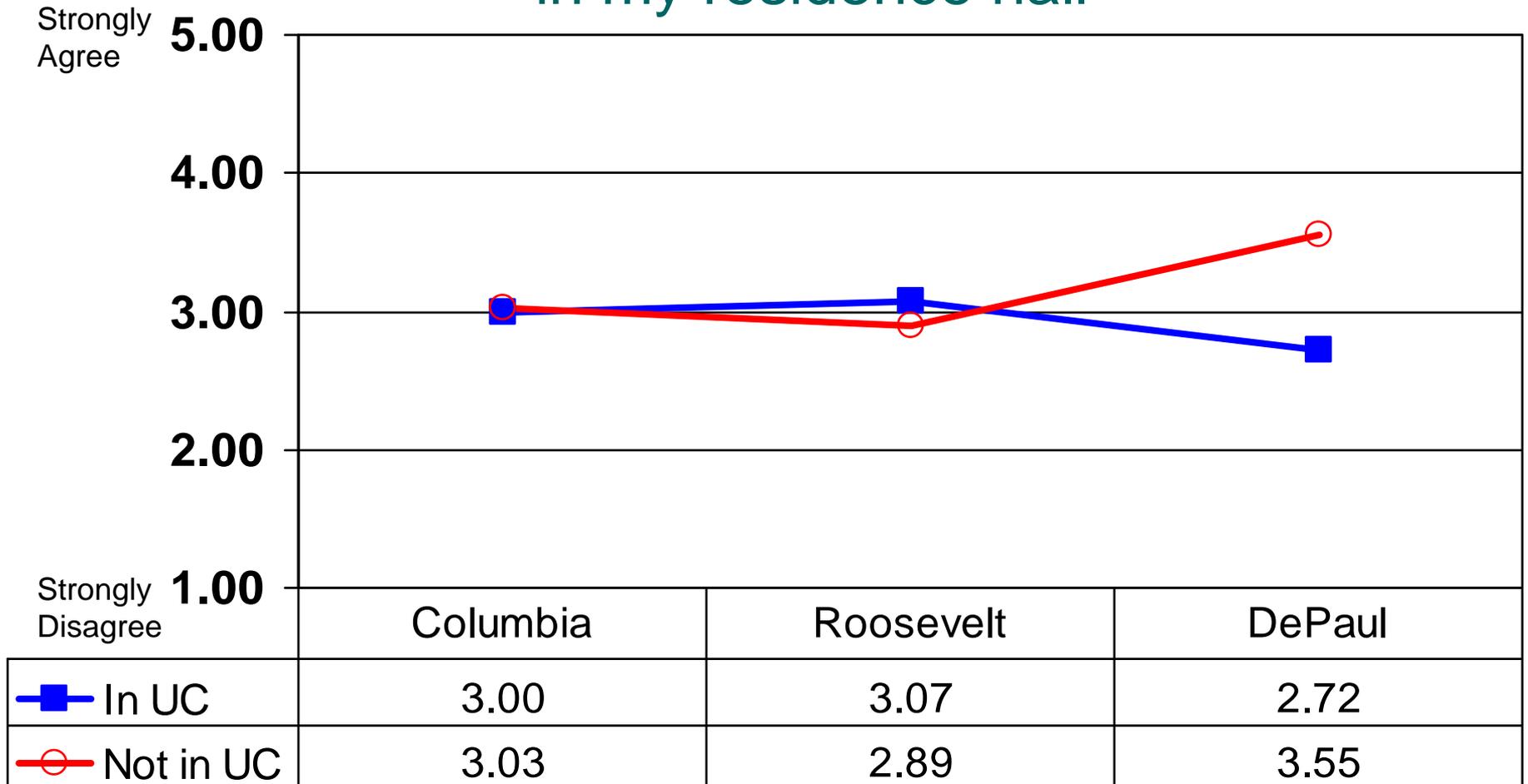
- Six items assessing students' feelings of belongingness to their individual schools:
 - 1) I feel like part of a college campus living in my residence hall.
 - 2) During your time in your residence hall, how often have you felt left out?
 - 3) During your time in your residence hall, how often have you felt like you belong at your school?

Results: Sense of Belonging

- Six items assessing students' feelings of belongingness to their individual schools:
 - 4) During your time in your residence hall, how often you have felt disconnected from other students from your school?
 - 5) During your time in your residence hall, how often you have felt isolated from the rest of the university?
 - 6) How satisfied are you with your residence halls proximity to the your school?

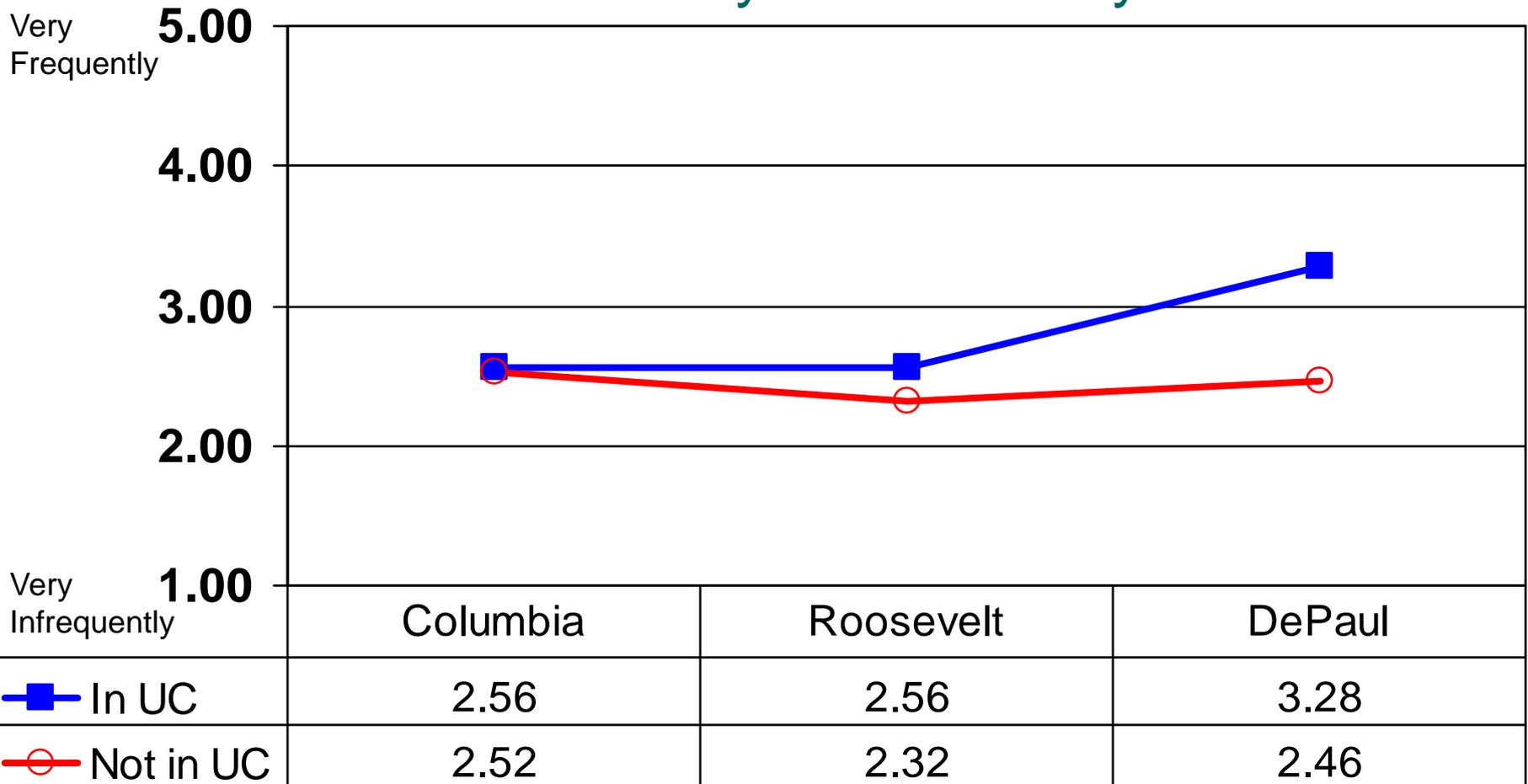
Results: Sense of Belonging

I feel like a part of a college campus
in my residence hall



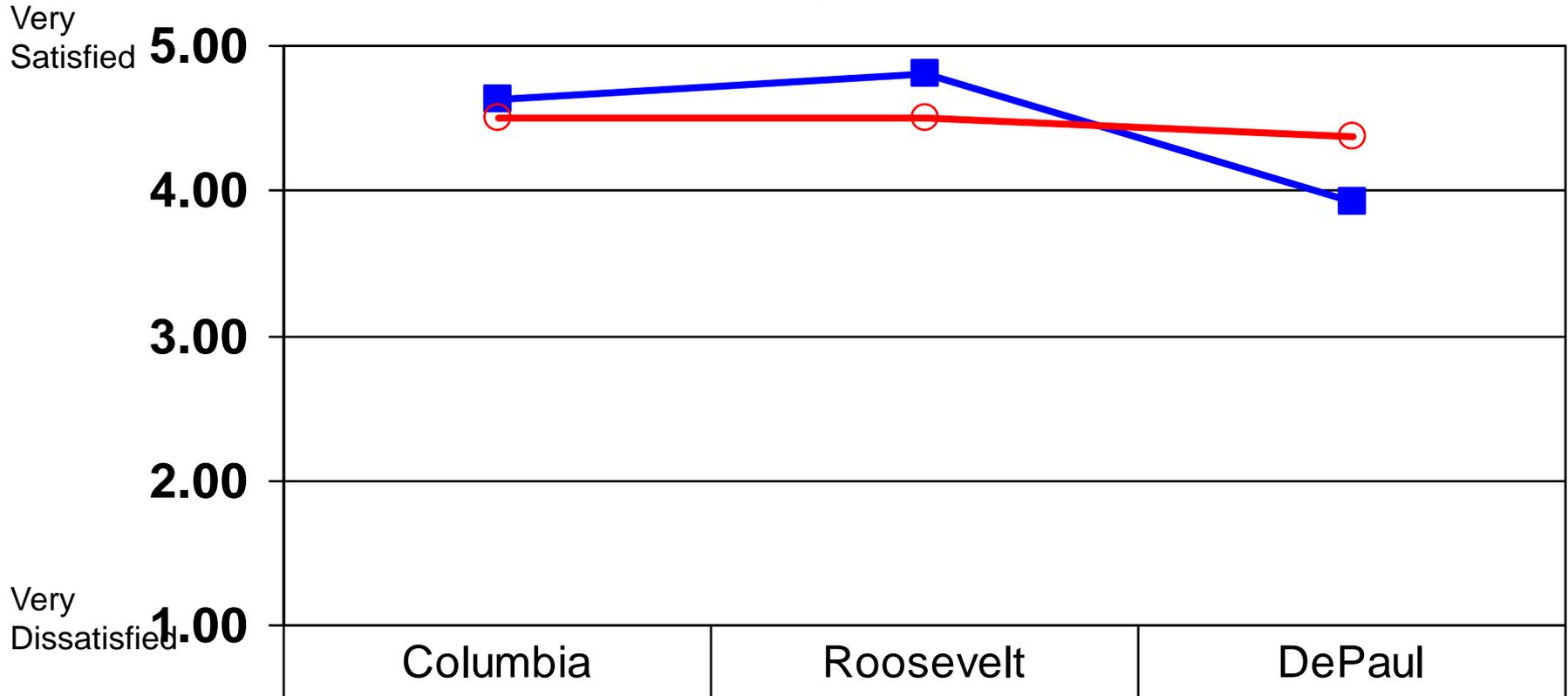
Results: Sense of Belonging

How often have you felt isolated from the rest of your university?



Results: Sense of Belonging

How satisfied are you with your residence hall's proximity to your school?



In UC	4.63	4.80	3.92
Not in UC	4.50	4.50	4.38

Results: Sense of Belonging

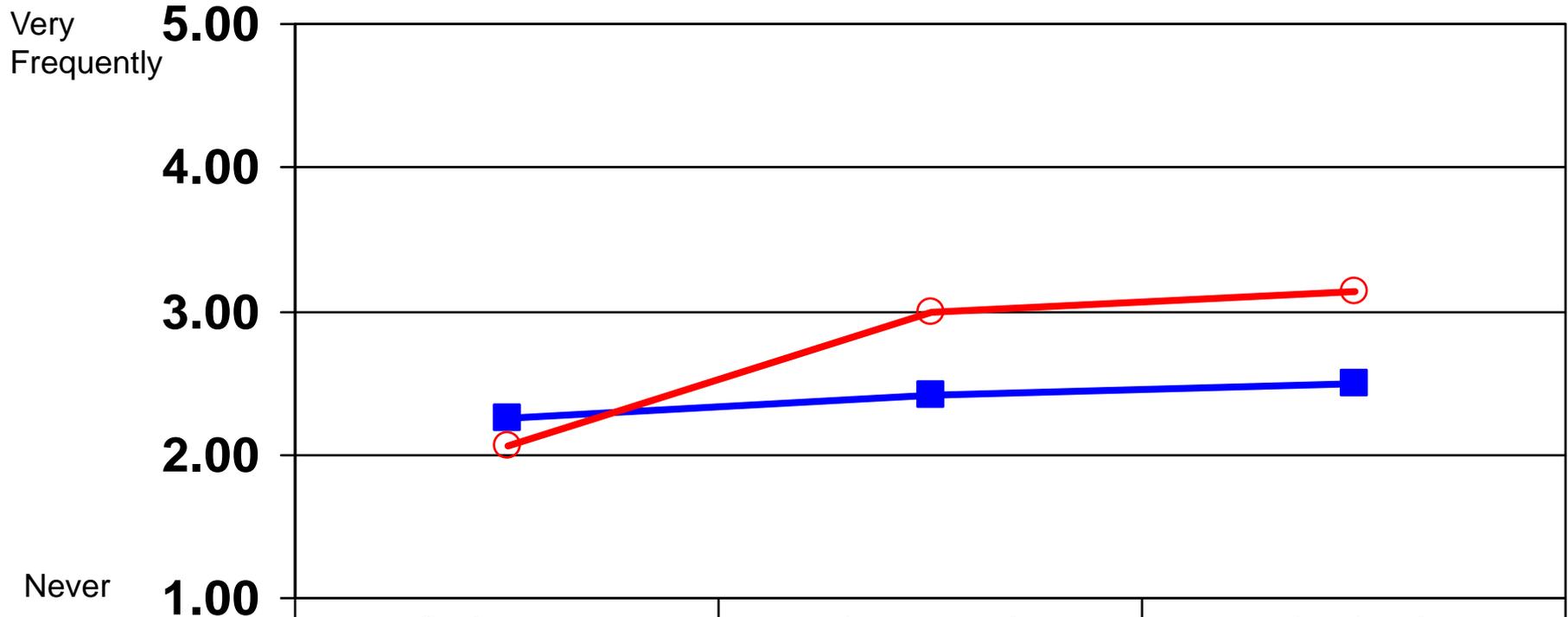
- As expected, DePaul students living in the UC felt a greater sense of isolation from their campus than Roosevelt or Columbia students.
 - “There is not a sense of community among DePaul students at the UC. We all go up to Lincoln Park on the weekends, and spend a majority of our time there, anyway.”
(DePaul UC Resident)

Results: Sense of Belonging

- Some responses indicate that residents may not consider the UC as part of their campus.
 - When asked how much time they spent on campus engaging in various activities, UC student responses indicated less time spent “on-campus”.
 - This seemed more true for Roosevelt and DePaul UC residents than for Columbia
 - Columbia’s campus is spread across South Loop, Roosevelt & DePaul’s campuses are concentrated in two or three buildings in close proximity to one another.

Results: Sense of Belonging

How often did you study on campus with classmates?



In UC	2.25	2.42	2.49
Not in UC	2.06	3.00	3.13

Discussion

- Students from Columbia and Roosevelt are more satisfied with the South Loop life than are DePaul Students.
 - Campuses are geographically concentrated in the South Loop
 - Smaller student bodies with larger percentage of commuter undergraduates
 - Other residence halls are located in close proximity to UC

Discussion

- Fourth culture has not yet emerged, but students expressed interest in and desire for a more integrated experience between schools
 - Several students expressed interest in living on the same floor, or sharing a room with students from a different school
 - More emphasis on multi-school events

Discussion

- Sense of community is lacking amongst students from the same school as well as between schools
 - Many students expressed the desire for better, more widely advertised activities coordinated between schools
 - Findings suggest students may not consider the UC as part of their actual campus
 - University publications and rhetoric should emphasize the UC as part of the campus

Evolution of Campus Life

- Reinforce UC as part of our campuses and bring UC students into campus life
- Continue to develop and reinforce “fourth culture,” as a student’s sense of campus community with the greater Loop/South Loop college town.

Next Steps

- Student retention
 - Explore differences between UC vs. non-UC residents in terms of first-year retention and student persistence
 - Proportion of UC residents that returned to UC, transferred to another residence hall, or moved off campus in AY 2005-06
- Academic performance indicators and outcomes of students in UC vs. non-UC

Questions?

Laura Kehoe: lkehoe@roosevelt.edu

Elizabeth Silk: esilk@colum.edu

Liz Sanders: lsander3@depaul.edu

Joseph Filkins: jfilkins@depaul.edu

This presentation and paper will be
available for download at:

<http://oipr.depaul.edu/open/general/presentations.asp>