

Entering Student Survey, 1999: Methodology and Response Frequencies

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INTRODUCTION

The Office of Educational Assessment (OEA) periodically surveys groups of students and alumni regarding their expectations of and experiences with the University of Washington (UW). The goal of these surveys is to describe student backgrounds, explore what students hope to achieve at the UW, and assess what students feel are the positive and negative aspects of UW academics and community life. Newly-enrolled undergraduates are a group of particular interest because their views may be taken as indicators of current trends. This report describes the methodology used for the 1999 Entering Student survey and provides tables of response frequencies.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

According to the UW Office of Admissions, the Seattle campus entering class of Autumn 1999 consisted of 4515 first-time, first-year students ("freshmen") and 2057 transfer students, for a total of 6572 entering undergraduates. Of these, 3787 attended a "freshman" session of the New Student Orientation during the summer of 1999 and 1173 attended an Orientation session geared toward transfer students. For the purposes of this report, students have been classified as *freshman* or *transfer* according to the type of Orientation session they attended.

Students were asked to complete the Entering Student Survey as they checked into their sessions; thus, there were 4960 students who potentially could have completed the Entering Student Survey, and 2604 of these students (2143 freshman and 461 transfer) did so. It should be noted that OEA received no surveys from one of the freshman sessions (attended by 237 students) and three of the transfer sessions (attended by a total of 262 students). Surveys were also distributed to academic advisors in hopes of capturing some of those students who did not attend any Orientation session. This brought in an additional 195 surveys, bringing the grand total to 2799. In sum, 42.6% of the Autumn 1999, Seattle campus, entering undergraduates completed the Entering Student Survey.

Survey Instrument

The Entering Student Survey consists of 23 items -- though several of these might better be classed as multi-item scales. All items are forced-choiced and closed-ended. Several of the items query students about their academic backgrounds (e.g., highest degree completed, parents' educational levels), while others ask about students' knowledge and opinion of the UW. There are several items which ask about

volunteer work and computer use during the year preceding completion of the survey. The bulk of the items were designed to tap into students' plans, aspirations, and expectations. One section asks students to indicate their endorsement of a variety of personal, social, and educational goals, while another section asks participants to rate themselves on seventeen different skills. Reasons for choosing the UW and social and practical concerns over what one might experience at the UW were also assessed. The questionnaire is provided here in PDF format:

[Entering Student Questionnaire](#)

RESPONSE FREQUENCIES

Response frequencies for each of the items on the Entering Student Questionnaire are provided in PDF format:

[Response frequency tables](#)

Responses of students who entered the UW directly from high school (as "freshmen") were compared to those of students who transferred from another post-secondary institution. Items on which there were significant differences between the groups are reported in PDF format:

[Freshman-transfer comparisons](#)