

Office of

Testing Services and Assessment

1999 New Freshmen Survey

Beginning in June 1999, we surveyed new freshmen registering for the Fall 1999 semester about their motivations for attending college and their reasons for selecting UW-Green Bay. A total of 567 students completed the survey, representing 61 percent of the new freshmen enrolled for the Fall 1999 semester.

Why are our students attending college, and why did they choose UW-Green Bay?

Top four reasons for attending college

(ranking based on mean scores; % who said factor was "very important" listed in parentheses):

1. To be able to get a better job (89%)
2. To learn about things that interest me (74%)
3. To gain a general education (61%)
4. To be able to make more money (63%)

Reasons 1, 2, and 4 occupied the same positions in the 1998 New Freshmen Survey.

All but 3 percent of the respondents expect to earn a bachelor's degree or more. 50 percent plan to earn a master's, professional, or doctoral degree.

Jobs in **interesting** fields that **pay well** are important to our students. They believe that a bachelor's degree (and possibly a master's degree) will help them to get good jobs in fields interesting to them. They do not want to "make a career" from their current, primarily part-time, jobs.

Top five reasons for choosing UW-Green Bay

(ranking based on mean scores; % who said factor was "very important" listed in parentheses):

1. Appearance and facilities (71%)
2. Academic majors or programs (67%)
3. Graduates get good jobs (64%)
4. Good academic reputation (54%)
5. (three-way tie) Low tuition (51%), UW-Green Bay's size (50%), Type of campus housing (58%)

What didn't make the "Top Five" list of "very important" reasons for choosing UW-Green Bay? (% who said factor was "very important" in parentheses)

1. Parents' or other relatives' wishes (5%)
2. Advice from a teacher/counselor (6%)
3. Wanting to live close to home (27%)
4. Financial assistance (27%)
5. UW-Green Bay's "unique interdisciplinary approach to education (30%)"
6. UW-Green bay's social reputation (38%)
7. Graduates go to top graduate schools (39%)

91 percent of the respondents told us that it was "somewhat" (25%) or "very likely" (66%) that they would **need a**

job to help with paying college expenses. About one-third (32%) thought they *might* need to work full-time while attending college. 93 percent said they were planning to work at least part-time while in college.

Is UW-Green Bay an "institution of preference?" Yes and no.

Three-fourths (78%) of the respondents identified UW-Green Bay as their **first choice** of institutions to attend, and another 19 percent identified us as their second choice.

47 percent of all respondents said they were "somewhat" or "very likely" to transfer to another institution.

Of the 432 students who said we were their **first choice**, 41 percent indicated that they were "somewhat" (35%) or "very likely" (6%) to transfer.

When asked why they were "somewhat" or "very likely" to transfer to another college, 23 percent of the respondents said that they might want to **move closer to or further away from home**. Another 20 percent said they might want to go to a **bigger or smaller** school. While 10 percent said that UW-Green Bay does not offer the major they want, another 18 percent thought they might eventually choose a major not offered by UW-Green Bay. Only 11 percent of the respondents cited enrollment in a pre-professional program as their reason for transferring.

While 42 percent of the respondents said they were certain they would graduate (though not necessarily from UW-Green Bay), 27 percent said that a good job offer could cause them to leave without a degree. Another 12 percent said they might leave *sans* degree if getting a degree cost more than their family could afford.

Students who said they might leave college without a degree were more likely to attribute their potential departure to **external**, rather than internal, forces. Very few students thought they would leave because of disinterest (5%), lack of ability (3%), or insufficient reading or study skills (2%).

Linking the data presented thus far, one might reasonably hypothesize that at this stage in their lives many of our students prefer to **minimize their risks**. They think they want a bachelor's degree, but they want to "experiment" with being a college student before committing to a particular institution. They have chosen UW-Green Bay because they believe:

1. it offers a *good general education* (and they know that most universities require some kind of general education),
2. it is *reasonably close* to their established support network (e.g., family, friends),
3. *they can afford the costs* of being educated at UW-Green Bay (i.e., tuition and fees, and living costs),
4. UW-Green Bay seems to offer an *attractive, friendly, and safe* college environment, and
5. UW-Green Bay has a *good academic reputation*.