

Office of

Testing Services and Assessment

2000 New Freshmen Survey

We surveyed new freshmen registering for the Fall 2000 semester (during the May and June 2000 SOAR sessions) about their motivations for attending college and their reasons for selecting UW-Green Bay. A total of 798 students completed the survey, representing 81 percent of the new freshmen enrolled for the Fall 2000 semester (798 of 989).

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 (82%)
2. To learn about things that interest me (73%)
3. To be able to make more money (63%)
4. To gain a general education (60%)

Reasons 1 and 2 occupied the same positions in the 1999 and 1998 New Freshmen Survey.

All but 6 percent of the respondents expect to earn a bachelor's degree or more. 47 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 (59%)
2. Interesting academic majors or programs (59%)
3. Graduates get good jobs (53%)
4. Type of campus housing (50%)
5. Low tuition (46%)

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. Advice from a teacher/counselor (5%)
2. Parents' or other relatives' wishes (6%)
3. Financial assistance offered (22%)
4. UW-Green Bay's "unique interdisciplinary approach to education (23%)"
5. Wanting or needing to live close to home (25%)
6. Graduates go to top graduate schools (30%)
7. UW-Green Bay's social reputation (36%)
8. UW-Green Bay's size (45%)

9. UW-Green Bay's academic reputation (45%)

90 percent of the respondents told us that it was "somewhat" (29%) or "very likely" (61%) that they would **need a job** to help with paying college expenses. Slightly more than one-third (38%) thought they *might* need to work full-time while attending college. 95 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 (77%) of the respondents identified UW-Green Bay as their **first choice** of institutions to attend, and another 20 percent identified us as their second choice [2000 results = essentially unchanged from 1999 results].

56 percent of all respondents said they were "somewhat" or "very likely" to transfer to another institution [2000 results = up from 1999 results].

Of the 608 students who said we were their **first choice**, 49 percent indicated that they were "somewhat" (42%) or "very likely" (7%) to transfer. On the flip side, 64 percent (of students who said we were their first choice) said they were "very likely" to graduate from UW-Green Bay, and another 34 percent said they were "somewhat" likely to graduate from UW-Green Bay.

When asked why they were "somewhat" or "very likely" to transfer to another college, 16 percent of the respondents said that they might want to **go to a bigger school**. Another 15 percent said they might want to go to **move further away from home**. While 8 percent said that UW-Green Bay does not offer the major they want, 15 percent thought they might eventually choose a major not offered by UW-Green Bay. Only 8 percent of the respondents cited enrollment in a pre-professional program as their reason for transferring.

While 41 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 11 percent said they might leave *sans* degree if getting a degree cost more than their family could afford. Ten percent thought they might be disinterested in their studies.

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 lack of ability (5%) or insufficient reading or study skills (2%). Only four percent thought marriage and/or children might contribute to their premature departure from higher education.

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 have decided to pursue 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.

These statements do not pertain to any given individual, necessarily, but appear to characterize the group of new freshmen who enrolled at UW-Green Bay in Fall 2000.