

Office of

# Testing Services and Assessment

## 2001 New Freshmen Survey

We surveyed new freshmen registering for the Fall 2001 semester about their motivations for attending college and their reasons for selecting UW-Green Bay. A total of 831 students completed the survey, representing 92 percent (831/908) of the new freshmen enrolled for the Fall 2001 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 (79%)
2. To learn about things that interest me (72%)
3. To be able to make more money (59%)
4. To gain a general education (55%)

These are the same four reasons found in the 1999 and 2000 New Freshmen Surveys.

**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. Interesting academic majors or programs (61%)
2. Appearance and facilities (57%)
3. Graduates get good jobs (53%)
4. Good academic reputation (47%)
5. Size (43%)

#### 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 (6%)
2. Parents' or other relatives' wishes (8%)
3. Financial assistance offered (22%)
4. Advice from a friend or sibling (19%)
5. Wanting to live close to home (26%)
6. UW-Green Bay's "unique interdisciplinary approach to education (24%)"
7. Graduates go to top graduate schools (29%)
8. UW-Green Bay's social reputation (34%)
9. Low tuition (39%)
10. Type of campus housing (48%)

90 percent of the respondents told us that it was "somewhat" (30%) or "very likely" (61%) that they would **need a**

**job** to help with paying college expenses. 62 percent expected to work at least 11 hours in a typical week during their first year. In nearly the same breath, 97 percent thought it was "somewhat" (31%) or "very likely" (66%) that they would make at least a "B" average while at UW-Green Bay.

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

About three-fourths (74%) of the respondents identified UW-Green Bay as their **first choice** of institutions to attend, and another 22 percent identified us as their second choice [2001 results = essentially unchanged from 1999 and 2000 results].

58 percent of all respondents said they were "somewhat" or "very likely" to transfer to another institution [2001 results = about the same as in 2000].

Of the 593 students who said we were their **first choice**, 64 percent indicated they were "very likely" to graduate from UW-Green Bay, and another 32 percent said they were "somewhat" likely to graduate from UW-Green Bay.

While 49 percent of the respondents said they were certain they would graduate (though not necessarily from UW-Green Bay), 20 percent said that a good job offer could cause them to leave without a degree (down from 27 percent). Another 10 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 (4%) or insufficient reading or study skills (2%).

## What else do we know about these students?

**Most expect to spend more time preparing for class than they will spend on any other single activity - but just barely.** In order of the typical number of hours per week that they expect to spend engaged in various activities, students tell us that they will spend the greatest amount of time preparing for class (16 hours on average), closely followed by time devoted to relaxing and socializing (14 hours on average), time spent working (13 hours on average), time spent in co-curricular activities (10 hours on average), and time spent caring for dependents (6 hours on average - less than five hours per week for 87% of the students).

### They expect an active and collaborative learning environment.

- 99 percent expect to ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions "occasionally" (39%), "often" (39%), or "very often" (21%).
- 98 percent plan to use e-mail to communicate with their instructors or other students "occasionally" (26%), "often" (39%), or "very often" (33%).
- 92 expect to make a class presentation at least "occasionally" (67%), "often" (21%), or "very often" (4%).
- 99 percent plan to work with other students on projects outside of class "occasionally" (48%), "often" (44%), or "very often" (7%).
- 95 percent expect to participate in a community-based project as part of a class at least "occasionally" (61%), "often" (29%), or "very often" (5%).
- 99 percent plan to discuss ideas from class with others outside of class at least "occasionally" (30%), "often" (43%), or "very often" (25%). Only a very small percentage of students expects to engage in these activities "**never**."

**Most expect and want to interact with faculty members and advisors.** 99 percent expect to discuss grades or assignments with their instructors "occasionally" (46%), "often" (41%), or "very often" (12%). 99 percent plan to talk about their career plans with a faculty member or advisor "occasionally" (49%), "often" (38%), or "very often" (12%). 95 percent expect to discuss ideas from their classes with their instructors "occasionally" (59%), "often" (28%), or "very often" (8%).

**Most want to be active, contributing members of the campus community. Being connected matters to them.**

- While 39 percent of the students thought they might "occasionally" go to class unprepared, 57 percent said they "never" planned to do so.
- Most expected to work hard to meet instructors' standards "often" (43%) and "very often" (48%).
- Very few students "agreed" (7%) or "strongly agreed" (4%) that they hoped to organize their class schedule so that they would be on campus as little as possible. [Importantly, however, 40 percent of the students were "neutral" with respect to this last statement.]
- Finally, all but two percent of the students said it was very important for them to feel connected to UW-Green Bay and its faculty, staff, and students ("strongly agree" - 31%; "agree" - 49%; "neutral" - 18%).

Note: 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 2001.