



Undergraduate Survey 2003:

**A Comparison of Responses for Freshman Starts
(Students who First Matriculated at UW-Madison)**

and Transfer Starts

**(Students who First Matriculated Elsewhere and Later
Enrolled at UW-Madison)**

The Undergraduate Survey was conducted by the UW Survey Center

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2003 Undergraduate Survey: Comparison of Students of Freshman Starts and Transfer Starts

The attached tables summarize questions from the undergraduate survey, fielded in Spring 2003, for junior and senior respondents¹. Of the total sample, 688 students were juniors and seniors – 544 freshmen starts and 144 transfer-starts. Some highlights are noted below.

Overall satisfaction (Table 1)

- The majority of freshmen starts and transfer starts are extremely satisfied or satisfied with their experience overall. However, the percentage of freshmen starts who are extremely satisfied or satisfied (92%) is significantly higher than for transfer starts (87%).
- The majority of freshmen starts (92%) and transfer starts (80%) definitely would or probably would enroll at UW-Madison if they had it to do over again. However, the percentage of freshmen starts who definitely would or probably would (92%) is significantly higher than for transfer starts (80%).

Courses and Assignments (Table 2)

- For questions about courses and assignments, there were few significant differences between the responses of freshmen starts and transfer starts. For example, they didn't differ significantly on the percent who had dropped a course, those who had attended all their courses, or how challenged they were to think in their courses.
- The most common reasons given by both freshmen starts and transfer starts for missing class frequently (several times a month or more) were too much school work and because they found the course boring. Freshmen starts were significantly more likely to give partying as a reason for missing class (12 % vs 3%).

Advising (Table 3)

- Freshmen starts met with advisors significantly more times than transfer starts: 83% of freshmen starts met with an advisor more than once compared with 75% of transfer starts.
- Freshmen starts and transfer starts gave similar ratings to their overall satisfaction with advising and the majority of both groups agreed that they were able to get the advice they needed.
- Significantly more transfer starts (17%) than freshmen starts (12%) agreed that there was an occasion when they need advising but were unsure where to go.

Quality of Instruction (Table 4)

- The majority of freshmen starts (65%) and transfer starts (66%) rated the overall quality of instruction as excellent or very good.
- The two groups were similar in most of their opinions about the quality of instruction. They didn't differ on feedback on assignments, availability of faculty, or the quality of teaching by faculty in the major.
- Freshmen starts were significantly more likely than transfer starts to rate interaction with faculty by e-mail as excellent or very good (74% vs 66%).

¹ The number of freshmen and sophomore respondents who were transfer students were too low to do meaningful analyses with that group.

Services, Registration and Financial Aid (Table 5)

- In general, freshmen starts and transfer starts gave similar ratings to their overall satisfaction with services, registration, and financial aid.
- Transfer starts were significantly more satisfied with the libraries than freshmen starts (85% vs 79%).
- Significantly more transfer starts than freshmen starts contacted Financial Services (45% vs 27%). Both groups were similarly satisfied with their financial aid package and how the financial aid office staff dealt with them.

Academic Major (Table 6)

- The great majority of freshmen starts (93%) and transfer starts (94%) had declared a major.
- The factors that influenced their choice of a major were similar. Influences of career preparation, parents, graduate school, and ease of completion were similar.
- Transfer students were significantly more likely than freshmen starts (28% vs 18%) to expect to complete a bachelor's degree as their highest degree. Freshmen starts were significantly more likely to expect to go to graduate or professional school.
- 99% of both groups expected to finish their bachelor's degree at UW-Madison

Research Activities (Table 7)

- In general, freshmen starts and transfer starts gave similar ratings to their overall satisfaction with opportunities for research.
- Freshmen starts were more likely than transfer starts to have participated in research with a faculty member (24% vs 18%).

Work and Debt (Table 8)

- Transfer students are more likely than freshmen starts to work more than 20 hours a week (42% vs 27%), and to work off campus (64% vs 45%).
- Transfer students are more likely than freshmen starts to have student loans (60% vs 38%), owe money to relatives (22% vs 16%) and have credit card debt (35% vs 23%).

Family Life (Table 9)

- Transfer students are more likely than freshmen starts to have mothers (38% vs 27%) and fathers (34% vs 22%) who didn't go to college.
- Transfer students are more likely than freshmen starts to be enrolled part-time (18% vs 9%).
- Transfer students are more likely than freshmen starts to have children (7% vs 2%), although being a parent and being a student is uncommon for both groups.
- Most juniors and seniors live independently from their parents in an apartment or house and give similar satisfaction ratings to their current living situation.

Undergraduate Student Survey, 2003

Table 1: Overall satisfaction

<u>Survey Question</u>	<u>Junior and Senior Students</u>	
	<u>Freshman Starts</u>	<u>Transfer Starts</u>
<u>Overall experience at the UW-Madison:</u>		
<u>% Extremely Satisfied plus Satisfied</u>	<u>92**</u>	<u>87**</u>
<u>% who rated cost of attending in relation to the quality of education as excellent or very good</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>64</u>
<u>% who rated the university in terms of creating sense a sense of "belonging" for students as excellent or very good</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>26</u>
<u>Since the beginning of this academic year, % of students who ever considered:</u>		
<u>Taking a leave of absence or dropping out of school</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Transferring to another college or university</u>	<u>8**</u>	<u>18**</u>
<u>% of who would still enroll at UW-Madison if they could start college over again:</u>		
<u>Definitely would</u>	<u>59**</u>	<u>31**</u>
<u>Probably would</u>	<u>33**</u>	<u>49**</u>
<u>Probably would not</u>	<u>7**</u>	<u>17**</u>
<u>Definitely would not</u>	<u>1**</u>	<u>4**</u>

Notes: 681 junior and senior students responded to the questions above in the 2003 survey, including 143 transfer starts and 538 freshman starts.

** indicates statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

* indicates statistically significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Undergraduate Student Survey, 2003

Table 2: Courses and Assignments

Survey Question	Junior and Senior Students	
	Freshman Starts	Transfer Starts
Since the beginning of the current academic year:		
% who dropped one or more courses	33	36
% who attended at least 95% of classes	51	55
% who handed in all assignments on time	67	65
% who rated the following Excellent and Very Good:		
Extent to which courses challenge you to think	70	71
Honors programs and courses	44	30
Quality of classrooms	28	24
Quality of laboratory facilities	35	38
Class size:		
% taking 1-3 classes with more than 100 students	52	53
% taking 1-3 classes with less than 25 students	52	56
% who frequently (everyday to several times a month) missed class, discussion section, or lab, or came to class unprepared because:		
too much school work to do	24	21
found the course boring	34	29
feeling too down or stressed	15	17
physical health problems	4	4
conflict between employment and academic work	13	17
partying the day of the class or the previous night	12**	3**
not understanding what was going on in the class	4	5
other campus activities	6**	2**
athletic activities	4	3
volunteer work	1	0

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Undergraduate Survey, 2003

Table 3: Advising

Survey Question	Junior and Senior Students							
	Freshman Starts				Transfer Starts			
	None	Once	2-3 times	More than 3 times	None	Once	2-3 times	More than 3 times
% who communicated by e-mail with an academic advisor since the Fall semester began.	34	17	26	23	37	16	25	22
% who met with an academic advisor since the Fall semester began.	17*	30*	38*	15*	25*	22*	32*	22*
For this academic year, % who rated the quality of the following aspects of advising Excellent and Very Good								
Quality of advising on course selection	52				46			
Advising regarding the requirements of major or majors under considerations	64**				48**			
Academic advising about degree requirements other than your major	43**				32**			
The amount of time the advisor(s) was able to spend with you	50				45			
Advisor's knowledge of rules, requirements, and academic programs	57				54			
Advisor's attitude to you	69				69			
Overall quality of academic advising	32				33			
% who said YES, they had serious difficulty scheduling a time to meet with an advisor.	15				15			
Of those who never met with an advisor, % who tried but were unable to schedule a meeting with an academic advisor	7				10			
% who said YES to the question, "During the current academic year when you needed advising on your academic program, was there ever a time when you were not sure where to go?"	12*				17*			
% who said YES, when they met an advisor they were ultimately able to get the advice they needed	80				80			
% who sought help or advice from University staff regarding career options or career preparation	42**				33**			
% who were able to get the career advice they needed	91				92			

Notes: 628 junior and senior students responded to the 2003 survey, including 132 transfer students and 496 freshman starts.

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Undergraduate Survey, 2003

Table 4: Quality of Instruction

<u>Survey Question</u>	<u>Junior and Senior Students</u>	
	<u>Freshman Starts</u>	<u>Transfer Starts</u>
<u>% who rated the following Excellent or Very Good:</u>		
<u>Overall quality of instruction</u>	65	66
<u>Feedback you were given by instructors on your work</u>	42	45
<u>Faculty members' sensitivity to needs as a student</u>	45	49
<u>Availability of faculty to discuss course-related issues in person outside the class</u>	63	59
<u>Quality of interaction with faculty by e-mail</u>	74**	66**
<u>Quality of teaching by faculty in the major</u>	73	70
<u>% of students who have 1-3 classes with TA</u>	38	39
<u>% who rate overall quality of instructions by TA as Excellent and Very Good</u>	48**	30**
<u>% of students who have 1-3 non-native English speaking TAs</u>	47	50
<u>% who rate overall quality of instruction by non-native English speaking TA as Excellent and Very Good</u>	32	33
<u>% who Strongly Agree or Agree that:</u>		
<u>My instructors are clear in what they expect of me.</u>	95	93
<u>My instructors really don't seem to care whether or not I succeed.</u>	18	22
<u>Too many instructors set unrealistically high expectations for their students.</u>	28	24
<u>They would learn more if my instructors had higher expectations and set higher standards.</u>	26	30
<u>% responding that the standards and expectations set by instructors are:</u>		
<u>Too High</u>	8	8
<u>About Right</u>	87*	81*
<u>Not High Enough</u>	6*	11*

Notes: 670 junior and senior students responded to the questions above in the 2003 survey, including 141 transfer starts and 529 freshman starts.

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Undergraduate Survey, 2003

Table 5: Services, Registration, Financial Aid

<u>Survey Question</u>	<u>Junior and Senior Students</u>	
	<u>Freshman Starts</u>	<u>Transfer Starts</u>
<u>% who rate the following services and facilities Excellent or Very Good:</u>		
Libraries	79*	85*
Registration process and ability to register for courses you wanted	55	59
Registration process in terms of how the process worked	62	61
Quality of Classrooms	28	24
Quality of laboratories	35	38
Opportunities for service learning, internships, community involvement	54	46
Summer session	53	53
Computer facilities for students	60	61
Access to cultural and artistic opportunities and events	57	53
 <u>Registration - Since the beginning of this academic year,</u>		
How many times have you been unable to get into upper level courses required for their major? % who responded ZERO times.	68	71
How many times have you been unable to get into introductory courses you wanted to take? % who responded ZERO times.	70	72
How many times have you been unable to take courses you wanted because there was not space available at times convenient for your schedule? % who responded ZERO times.	43	45
 <u>Financial Aid:</u>		
<u>% who contacted the financial aid offices in the current academic year</u>	27**	45**
<u>% who rated the financial aid package received as Excellent or Very Good</u>	45	49
<u>% who rated how the financial aid office dealt with them as Excellent or Very Good</u>	55	57

Notes: 670 junior and senior students responded to the questions above in the 2003 survey, including 141 transfer starts and 529 freshman starts.

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Undergraduate Survey, 2003

Table 6: Academic Major

<u>Survey Question</u>	<u>Junior and Senior Students</u>	
	<u>Freshman Starts</u>	<u>Transfer Starts</u>
% of students who had declared a major	93	94
% who rated the following Excellent and Very Good:		
The content of the curriculum and courses in the major	70	66
The quality of teaching by faculty in the major	73	70
% who were influenced a Great Deal or Some by each of the following in the choice of a major		
My major would prepare me for the career that I want to pursue	88	92
My major would prepare me for post graduate education	68	62
My parents encourage me to choose this major	25	26
When it came time to select a major, I realized that I had already fulfilled many of the requirements of the major	51	59
I preferred a different major, but I could not get into it	11	13
I preferred a different major, but did not have the academic background to succeed with it	9	10
It seemed like the easiest major for me to complete	22	25
% whose highest degree expected is:		
Bachelor's	18*	28*
Master's	56*	53*
Doctoral	21*	15*
% who Expect and Somewhat Expect to finish bachelor's degree at UW-Madison	99	99

Notes: 638 junior and senior students responded the questions above in the 2003 survey, including 135 transfer starts and 504 freshman starts.

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Undergraduate Student Survey, 2003

Table 7: Research Activities

<u>Survey Question</u>	<u>Junior and Senior Students</u>	
	<u>Freshman Starts</u>	<u>Transfer Starts</u>
<u>% who rate the following as Excellent or Very Good</u>		
Opportunities to engage in research, either on your own or on faculty research projects	56	56
Opportunities for service learning, internships, and community involvement	54	46
<u>% who participated in research with a faculty member, including a paid job on a research project, as well as volunteer or unpaid work involving a faculty member's research in the current academic year</u>		
% who participated in research with a faculty member as a part of a class or independent study or honors project for academic credit	24*	18*
% who held a position as an intern, including a paid job as well as any volunteer or unpaid work either on or off campus	27	27
<u>Weekly hours in this academic year that spent in an internship, practicum, student teaching, or other unpaid work related to your academic program</u>		
none	76	76
1-14hrs	17*	12*
15-19hrs	2	3
20-50hrs	5*	10*

Notes: 679 junior and senior students responded the questions above in the 2003 survey, including 143 transfer starts and 536 freshman starts.

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Undergraduate Survey, 2003

Table 8: Work and Debt

<u>Survey Question</u>	<u>Junior and Senior students</u>	
	<u>Freshman Starts</u>	<u>Transfer Starts</u>
<u>Hours per week working at a paid job in this academic year</u>		
None	24	23
1-14 hrs	34**	19**
15-19 hrs	16	16
20-50 hrs	27**	42**
<u>Do/did you work on or off campus?</u>		
% who worked on campus	47**	30**
% who worked off campus	45**	64**
% who worked both on and off campus	8	7
<u>Weekly hours in this academic year that spent in an internship, practicum, student teaching, or other unpaid work related to your academic program</u>		
none	76	76
1-14hrs	17*	12*
15-19hrs	2	3
20-50hrs	5*	10*
<u>Debt</u>		
% who currently owe money to banks or other financial institutions for student loans	38**	60**
% who owe money to parents or relatives for loans to help pay for education	16*	22*
% who have \$200 or more credit card debt or other installment loans, not including balances normally pay in full each month	23**	35**
% who have other debts of \$200 or more	6**	18**

Notes: 671 junior and senior students responded the questions above in the 2003 survey, including 141 transfer starts and 532 freshman starts.

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* indicates statistically significant difference at the 90% confidence

Undergraduate Survey, 2003

Table 9: Family and Living Situation

Survey Questions	Junior and Senior Students	
	Freshman Starts	Transfer Starts
% who have dependent children	2**	7**
% whose parents have some college education or more		
Mother	73**	62**
Father	78**	66**
Enrollment Status		
% not enrolled	7	6
% enrolled Part-time (1-11 credits)	9**	18**
% enrolled Full-Time (12 or more credits)	84**	74**
Housing		
% who live with parents	2	5
% who live in a residence hall (University or private)	7	7
% who live in an apartment or house	88	84
% who ever lived in a University residence hall	82**	18**
% who rate University residence halls as Excellent or Very Good	46	32
% who rate their current living situation as Excellent or Very Good	61	57

Notes: 673 junior and senior students responded to the questions above in the 2003 survey, including 142 transfer starts and 532 freshman starts.

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* indicates statistically significant difference at the 90% confidence level.

Undergraduate Survey, 2003

Table 10: Questions Only Asked of Transfer Starts

<u>Survey Question</u>	<u>Junior and Senior Transfer Starts</u>
How much difficulty did you have making the transition from previous college or university to UW-Madison:	
A great deal of difficulty	7
Some difficulty	23
A little difficulty	40
No difficulty at all	30
How well did your previous college work prepared you for UW-Madison:	
Extremely well	34
Somewhat well	56
Not very well	11
How satisfied were you with the assistance you received from UW-Madison making the transition:	
Very satisfied	24
Somewhat satisfied	43
Somewhat dissatisfied	26
Extremely dissatisfied	7
% of transferred students transferred in the following years:	
pre-1999	18
2000 (third year)	27
2001 (second year)	29
2002 (first year)	25
2000, 2001, 2002	71

Notes: 144 transfer starts answered the questions above.