

<http://oregonstate.edu/studentaffairs/assessment-osu-perspective>

First Year Students

This issue is dedicated to our first year students. Our first year students bring a feeling of hope and vitality to the campus each fall when they arrive.

During the term and a half they have spent on campus, they have experienced their first college classes, midterms, first quarter grades, academic advising, and meeting many new people. Some have already chosen to leave OSU after only one term, others are still here and intending to stay.

The following sections in this issue will focus and describe our first year students

and their hopes, dreams, experiences, opinions, and self-rating of their skills and abilities.

The data used to describe our first year students was taken from the Freshman Survey, administered by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program out of UCLA. OSU participated in this survey during the 2011 summer START sessions at OSU. The full OSU report on this survey can be found at the following link: http://oregonstate.edu/studentaffairs/sites/default/files/docs/2011_cirp_report_final_0.pdf

- In This Issue**
- College Selection
 - Preparation for College
 - Concern about Financing College
 - Experience with Diversity
 - Student Beliefs/ Opinions
 - How has Using and Measuring Learning Outcomes Worked for You?
 - Student Affairs Strategic Planning

COLLEGE SELECTION

Over 72% of OSU first time, full time, first year students chose OSU as their first choice college. Nevertheless, these first year students did overall apply to more than one college. In fact, these students tell us that most applied to more than just OSU.

Table 1:
Number of Colleges Applied To

Number of colleges applied to other than OSU	Percent
None	27.4
1	17.4
2	16.0
3 or more	39.3

Five reasons for attending college that students sited most frequently as very important included:

- ⇒ To learn more about things that interest me (85.8%)
- ⇒ To be able to get a better job (83.4%)
- ⇒ To get training for a specific career (77.1%)
- ⇒ To be able to make more money (67.9%)
- ⇒ To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas (67.3%)

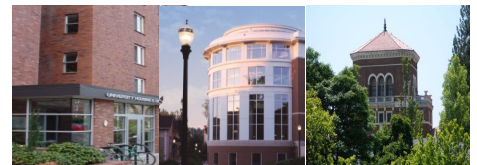
The top four of these reasons have remained the highest rated reasons for OSU students for attending college since 2001.

Three reputational factors were reported most frequently as very important in students' decision-making to attend OSU in particular. These included:

- ◆ This college has a very good academic reputation (50.5%)

- ◆ This college's graduates get good jobs (36.4%)
 - ◆ This college has a good reputation for its social activities (36.3%).
- When compared to previous administrations of the survey, these three reasons have consistently been listed as the top three reputational reasons students site for attending OSU.

OSU entering students nevertheless had a significantly lower orientation to college reputation compared to students in other medium-selective universities. This suggests that at least for most OSU entering students reputation was not a strong influence in their college choice.



Preparation for College

Students experiences in their last year of high school can sometimes be predictive of how they will manage the demands of the collegiate first year. For example: Students who were academically successful in high school may use the same strategies in college. Table 2 below contains the high school grades students reported as well as the number of hours studying in an average week. Notice that of those students who reported getting mostly "A's" in high school about half of them reported that they studied 5 hours or less per week. Likewise about 95% who reported mostly "C's" in high school reported that they studied 5 hours or less per week. Student study habits do not seem to have changed appreciably since 2004 though for "A" and "B" students there does seem to be some evidence that they are studying more than in previous years.

Active involvement in educationally purposeful activities has been shown to

Table 2:
Study Time Per Week and High School Grades

High School Grades	Year	% studying 5 or less hrs/ week	% studying 16 + hrs/ week
High School GPA of A or A+	2011	49	12
	2006	47	7
	2005	58	9
	2004	57	10
High School GPA of B	2011	64	10
	2006	71	4
	2005	73	4
	2004	71	4
High School GPA of C	2011	96	0
	2006	71	7
	2005	75	6
	2004	67	7

have positive effects on student learning. Over 54% of entering students reported that they frequently asked questions in their high school classes. While, about 47% reported that they frequently revised their papers to improve their writing. Fewer students reported that they frequently evaluated the quality or reliability of information that they received.

Nearly 60% reported that they frequently took notes in class while about 54% indicated that they worked with other students on group projects.

Nearly one quarter of entering students expected to need special tutoring or remedial work in Mathematics, 9% in Writing and over 10% in Science. Yet, over 58% reported that they had taken between 1 and 4 AP courses in high school.

Continued on Page 4

Concern About Financing College

Most students report that they have at least some concern about how they will finance college. Only about 27% indicated that they had no concerns about how they would finance college. Thus, about 83% had a least some concern with 12.3% reporting major

concerns about how they will finance their college education.

Since OSU began administering the CIRP Freshman Survey in 2001, the percentage of first year students who expressed major concern about how they would finance their education declined from 18.4% in 2001 to 12.3% in 2011.

Several questions arose when trying to understand this decline given the current economic situation. Did OSU provide alternate sources of funding which enabled students from lower income brackets to fund their education or did fewer numbers of students from lower income brackets choose to attend OSU ? This is an issue that likely needs further examination.

Table 3:
Concern About Financing College

Level of Concern	2011%	2006 %	2005 %	2004 %	2003 %	2002 %	2001 %
None (I am confident that I will have sufficient funds)	27.1	34.5	32.8	32.2	33.9	29.4	31.6
Some (but I probably will have enough funds)	60.6	53.1	54.5	54.5	49.9	54.9	50.0
Major (not sure I will have enough funds to complete college)	12.3	11.5	12.4	13.4	16.2	15.7	18.4

For further information, please contact Rebecca Sanderson at the Student Affairs Research, Evaluation and Planning Office.

Oregon State University, 103 Poling Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331, 541.737.8738, Rebecca.Sanderson@oregonstate.edu

Experience with Racial Diversity

Generally, most OSU entering students have little experience with racial diversity. About 88% of OSU students reported that they attended a high school that was completely or mostly white. Only about 9% indicated that their high school was mostly non-white or completely non-white. The all or mostly white neighborhoods in which most students (67%) grew up also reflected few racial differences.

When students were asked to rate their ability to discuss and negotiate controversial issues over 62% rated themselves in the highest 10% or above average group when compared to their peer group. Additionally, almost 79% rated themselves likewise on their ability to work cooperatively with diverse people.

Yet, when asked about their openness to having their own views challenged fewer than 60% rated themselves in the highest 10% or above average group. It was inter-

esting to note the level of confidence students had in their ability to negotiate issues of difference when they admittedly had little first hand experience with racially diverse people.

Generally, about 63% of OSU entering students thought there was a very good chance of their socializing with someone of a racial/ethnic group different than their own. OSU female entering students indicated more openness to this than did the entering male students. However, students generally did not think there was a very good chance that they would have a roommate of a different race/ethnicity. Only 24.8% reported that there was a very good chance of this happening.

These results were not surprising given that most OSU students are from Oregon; however, their confidence in their ability to negotiate differences was surprising given the small degree of experience they seem to have had in this area..

Student Beliefs/Opinions

Over 50% of entering students strongly or somewhat agreed to the following:

- ◆ The chief benefit of a college education is to increase ones earning power
- ◆ A national health care plan is needed to cover everybody's medical costs
- ◆ Same sex couples should have the right to legal marital status
- ◆ Abortion should be legal
- ◆ Addressing global warming should be a federal priority

Less than 30% of entering students strongly or somewhat agreed to the following:

- ◆ Racial discrimination is no longer a major problem in America
- ◆ Federal military spending should be increased

Continued from Page 2

Preparation for College

Nevertheless over 71% reported that their academic ability was in the highest 10% or above average when compared with the average person their age. Yet, regarding mathematical ability, over 48% reported that their ability in this area was in the highest 10% or above average when compared to their peers.

Thus, overall their self-estimations of their abilities were quite high even though they believed they might need additional specialized academic help.



Student Affairs Strategic Planning Blog

For those of you in the Division of Student Affairs and who are interested in following the progress of our strategic planning initiative groups, we now have a blog! Please go to:

<http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/studentaffairsstrategicplan/>

Also the link can be found on the Division of Student Affairs webpage under Strategic Planning.

**Pursuing a
Possibility Rich
Future**

How Has Using and Measuring Learning Outcomes Worked for You?

This is a success story about how one Student Affairs unit has introduced and used teaching and assessment methods to improve the work of the students employed in that unit. It has also provided the students with a sense of accomplishment and pride as well as a vocabulary to talk about their work and its applicability to their future employment. The author, Deb Mott, MU Assistant Director for Events and Services, has instituted a process in which students use learning outcomes and the criteria for success to develop and monitor their work and to help others improve. This is Deb's story.

Learning outcomes, I had heard the phrase quite a lot and thought what a nicely coined phrase. Never would I have imagined how jazzed I could be over learning outcomes but I am. The staff of MU Guest Services is happily on our way creating learning outcomes thanks to an email that came out last summer from the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). The email announced that a learning community was forming for learning outcomes. I had no prior experience with creating learning outcomes or assessing them.

During last Fall Term I went to Waldo and Jessica White filled me with ideas and tools. I learned to craft statements and include data points to measure success. I shared these tools and ideas and went to work with our student staff and full-time employees. The students who are in leadership roles immediately took to the idea of learning outcomes as a way of bringing new staff into the fold.

What has resulted is a crew that's confident, caring, professional and darn-it people like them. Seriously, our staff has gotten more compli-

ments this year than ever before. They are more successful in carrying out their job expectations and meeting customer needs. They also can talk about what they have learned and can relate that to their future employment possibilities.

I attribute our success to several things. First of all we asked ourselves why we do what we do. The following conversations led us to define clear outcomes that we wanted to embody and employ daily. Our outcomes also gave meaning to our mission. Customer Service, Responsibility, Teamwork, Leadership and Autonomy are the outcomes for all staff. Each outcome has measurable points to evaluate the success of our work. We have learning outcomes that are designed for our entry level staff for setting up rooms to working with basic A/V but the over-arching work is designed for staff growth and self analysis. Staff that think critically, act professionally, have the confidence to walk our floors and enter meeting rooms and events with confidence are the results of our clearly articulating our expectations, teaching and mentoring our students about how to achieve the outcomes, and measuring their success in multiple ways.

We trust that when our customers use the Memorial Union to host their events, they will be taken care of and experience a confi-

OSU Perspective: What is it?

The **OSU Perspective** was developed to provide assessment and other information about our students and programs. We hope that by making this information available to OSU faculty and staff, we can stimulate conversation that helps keep students and student learning at our core.

The **Perspective** is published both in print and on the web: <http://oregonstate.edu/studentaffairs/assessment-osu-perspective>

Please contact Rebecca Sanderson, Ph.D., Student Affairs Research, Evaluation and Planning Office, 103 Poling Hall, 541-737-8738, or email: Rebecca.Sanderson@oregonstate.edu.

Masthead designed by Judy Burks, OSU. Editing assistance by Mum Mattison, OSU.

dent and competent student staff who knows how to work with people as part of a team and also who can work independently to solve problems and make decisions.

Implementing learning outcomes, sharing them with students and developing ways to measure their success has made all the difference.

For more information about how Deb and the MU Guest Services are using learning outcomes to work with students, contact: Deb Mott at 541-737-6688 or at Deb.Mott@oregonstate.edu

Sample MU Learning Outcomes

CUSTOMER SERVICE

- **Customer Interaction** – articulates clearly and listens to customers, maintains good eye and focuses on individual customer, and puts the customer first
- **Presentation** – positive image and reflection of self and the Memorial Union
- **Customer Satisfaction** – follows through with customers in order to meet their expectations, and is persistent and creative in meeting customer needs

RESPONSIBILITY

- **Attendance** – arrives on time for shifts, works during scheduled hours and makes arrangements for replacements as needed
- **Accuracy** – is precise and works within allotted time frames, acknowledges when mistakes missed deadlines occur and notifies supervisor appropriately
- **Accountability** – makes appropriate decisions regarding consequences of actions, and acts in a responsible manner

For further information, please contact Rebecca Sanderson at the Student Affairs Research, Evaluation and Planning Office.

Oregon State University, 103 Poling Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331, 541.737.8738, Rebecca.Sanderson@oregonstate.edu