



CAMPUS
ASSESSMENT
WORKING GROUP

**Transfer Student Perceptions of their
Transition to the University of Maryland
2007 Report**

**By members of the
Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG)
Beginnings Subgroup**



CAWG

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Executive Summary

During the 2003-2004 academic year, the Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) consulted with a number of administrators at UM and learned of an increasing interest in improving the transfer student experience. In the Spring of 2004, the Beginnings Subgroup of CAWG conducted a focus group study to learn about how transfer students perceived their experience entering the University of Maryland. Using qualitative research methods, this group analyzed transcripts from the focus groups and discovered a number of patterns related to the transfer student experience. The findings from the study indicated that some transfer students were having difficulty socially and academically adapting to UM, some transfer students were dissatisfied with some services on campus to assist them with their transition, and some found that information they needed was sometimes not available to them. The purpose of this study was to discover the extent to which the focus group findings were shared across the population of transfer students who attend UM.

The Beginnings Subgroup created and piloted a survey for transfer students to explore the findings in the focus group study. The committee developed these questions using other CAWG surveys, the literature on transfer students and student departure, and surveys from other campuses. In general, the findings from the survey responses indicate that the transfer student experience is not as negative as the students in the focus groups suggested. This report explores five areas of the transfer student experience and presents findings that are generalizable to the transfer population at UM. These include: transfer of credit, academics, social/personal transition, finances, and responsibility.

Transfer of Credit

A majority of respondents to the Transfer Survey positively viewed the credit transfer process. Two-thirds of students noted they either agree or strongly agree that UM accepted all the credits that they thought would transfer and they were satisfied with the number of credits that transferred into UM. One-third of respondents indicated that they found the transfer process to be very difficult. These differences, however, are not equally distributed among all transfer students. Transfer students from previous institutions within the state or from community colleges significantly viewed the transfer process more positively than students from institutions outside of Maryland or from four-year colleges.

Academics

Repeating questions from other CAWG surveys, we asked transfer students to assess their academic skills in a number of areas. Transfer students reported feeling confident or “strong” in using electronic information resources and seeing relationships, similarities, and differences among ideas. These students reported feeling “weak” in areas that require an understanding of research designs and framing a research question. The responses looked consistent when comparing the transfer students from this survey to students directly admitted from high school. Students from community colleges, however, were less likely to indicate feeling “strong” in areas such as framing a research question, understanding various research designs and writing, indicating that a focus on research at a doctoral research university may make the transition more difficult for these students.

Social Transition

Transfer students report having some difficulty in the social transition to UM. About half of UM transfer students felt that they were able to respond “strongly agree” or “agree” to each of the four questions we asked about the ease of their social adjustment. To better understand the social transition

process we asked a series of questions to see which factors influenced student adjustment. Respondents indicated that their commute was the top factor that negatively influenced their adjustment.

Finances

Transfer students report similar sources of support for their education as students directly admitted to UM. Respondents indicated that parents/relatives and student loans were the two top “major” sources of funding for their education. There were differences in the transfer population on their reliance of financial resources, however. Students who transferred from community colleges were more likely to depend on themselves rather than on family for financial support. These students were significantly more likely to utilize grants (PELL and SEOG) and credit cards and less likely to rely on family for financing college.

Responsibility

In the focus group study on the transfer student experience, “information and responsibility” was a major theme to emerge from the qualitative data. Transfer students from the focus group study indicated that there were gaps in the information they needed to succeed. They also assessed who was responsible for providing the information needed to transition socially or academically to campus. Students recognized that both they and the university had responsibility in the transition, but most indicated that the university could have done more. In the follow-up survey, we were interested in seeing if there is a relationship between how a student assesses responsibility for their transition to UM and their social and academic integration to the campus.

Overall, the data show that there is a relationship between the level of responsibility respondents place on “UM students” and social transition. Students who put high responsibility on the transition process on students were more likely to “strongly agree” or “agree” that they have successfully socially adjusted to campus. Students who did not place high responsibility on UM students for the transition process were less satisfied. There was no relationship between level of responsibility and academic performance.

Background

During the 2003-2004 academic year, the Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) consulted with a number of administrators at UM and learned of an increasing interest in improving the transfer student experience. In the Spring of 2004, the Beginnings Subgroup of CAWG conducted a focus group study to learn about how transfer students perceived their experience entering the University of Maryland. Using qualitative research methods, this group analyzed transcripts from the focus groups and discovered a number of patterns related to the transfer student experience. Eleven themes emerged from the study including the following topics:

- The admissions process;
- orientation;
- advising;
- academics;
- housing;
- transportation;
- finances;
- social factors;
- personal factors;
- reasons for attending UM; and,
- information and responsibility.

The findings from the study indicated that some transfer students were having difficulty socially and academically adapting to UM, some transfer students were dissatisfied with some services on campus to assist them with their transition, and some found that information they needed was sometimes not available to them.

As with any focus group study, there were a number of limitations in interpreting the findings. Focus groups, for example, tend to attract respondents with strong feelings toward the topic area the study is exploring, so the perspectives provided for the study can be extreme, either positive or negative. Additionally, the findings are not generalizable beyond the personal experiences of the students in the group. The focus group was useful, however, in identifying themes that may impact a student's transition and perceptions of UM.

After the focus group study was complete, the Beginnings Subgroup chose to conduct a follow-up study in the summer of 2006. The purpose of this study was to discover the extent to which the focus group findings were shared across the population of transfer students who attended UM. The group developed a questionnaire and surveyed a sample of transfer students to better understand the transfer student experience. A description of the methodology for this study is located in Appendix A.

The Survey

The Beginnings Subgroup created and piloted a survey for transfer students to explore the findings in the focus group study. The committee developed these questions using other CAWG surveys, the literature on transfer students and student departure, and surveys from other campuses. The committee developed three purposes for the study, which guide this analysis:

- To understand the differences between the experiences of students who transferred from 2-year and 4-year institutions;
- to understand the differences between students transferring from institutions within the state and outside the state; and,
- to explore whether the findings from the focus group study generalize to all transfer students at UM.

After reviewing the purposes for the study, the committee decided to develop their own questions or use questions from the CAWG surveys. The survey contained between 91 and 124 questionnaire items (depending on skip patterns) on the following topic areas:

- Admissions;
- orientation;
- transfer of credit;
- academic advising;
- academics;
- finances;
- social/personal issues; and,
- responsibility.

Admissions, orientation, and transfer of credit questions were directed to transfer students in their first year of college, so these students received a longer version of the survey. General impressions of transfer credit, academic advising, academics, finance, social/personal issues, and responsibility were directed to all respondents. A copy of the survey is in Appendix C. When possible, we also attempted to compare transfer students with students who were directly admitted to UM from high school. This report addresses the following topic areas: transfer of credit, academic integration, social integration, student finances, and responsibility.

Survey Respondents

In order to generalize the findings of this study to the entire transfer student population at the University of Maryland, we randomly sampled 2,446 out of a possible 6,219 transfer students to take the survey. Overall, 841 students participated in the survey out of a possible 2,446 yielding a 34.4% response rate. We tested to see if the sample of students who responded to the survey were representative of the population of transfer students. For the most part, the students that responded to the survey were representative with two exceptions: minority students were less likely to respond to the survey and male students were less likely to respond. Table 1 summarizes the demographic and background characteristics of the respondents in this survey. To correct for the under-representation of minority and male students in the sample, we employed a normalized weight, so that the results from any analysis using the questionnaire could estimate the perceptions from the entire transfer population. Aside from the data presented in this section, all numbers and percentages in this report reflect weighted values.

Because the purposes of this analysis focuses on possible differences related to the prior institution a transfer student attended, we checked to make sure that our sample of transfer students was representative of the sample by institution type and location. Table 2 provides these percentages for the respondents in the sample. Overall, there were no differences, by type or location of previous institution, and no corrections were warranted.

Table 1: Demographic and background characteristics of respondents and population†

| | Respondent (n=841) Percent | Population (N=6,219) Percent |
|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Race/ethnicity & citizenship* | | |
| American Indian | <1 | <1 |
| Asian | 11 | 13 |
| Black/African American | 10 | 13 |
| Foreign | 4 | 4 |
| Hispanic | 5 | 6 |
| Unknown | 11 | 10 |
| White | 57 | 53 |
| Gender** | | |
| Female | 56 | 49 |
| Male | 44 | 51 |
| Last class standing | | |
| Freshman | 3 | 4 |
| Sophomore | 25 | 24 |
| Junior | 38 | 36 |
| Senior | 33 | 37 |
| Attendance status | | |
| Full-time | 87 | 85 |
| Part-time | 13 | 15 |
| Average Age | 22.4 yrs | 22.9 yrs |

† Some values in the table do not total to 100% due to rounding.

* Significant differences between the sample and the population at the .05 level.

** Significant differences between the sample and the population at the .01 level.

Table 2: Previous institution characteristics in respondents and population

| | Respondent (n=841) Percent | Population (N=6,219) Percent |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Type of institution | | |
| Community college | 57 | 59 |
| 4-year College | 43 | 41 |
| Location of institution | | |
| In-state | 64 | 66 |
| Out-of-state | 36 | 34 |
| Combined (type and location) | | |
| Community college (Maryland) | 50 | 52 |
| Community college (out of state) | 7 | 7 |
| 4-year (Maryland) | 14 | 13 |
| 4-year (out of state) | 29 | 27 |

Findings

Overall, the findings from the survey indicate that students more positively perceive the transition process into the University of Maryland than the focus groups suggested. This section will provide the findings for the transfer of credit, academic integration, social integration, student finances, and responsibility questions. Each section will address the purposes of this study and make relevant comparisons between students who come from 4-year and community college institutions, in-state and out-of-state institutions, and students directly admitted from high school with students who transferred into UM (in cases where questions were repeated from previous CAWG surveys).

Transfer of Credit

A majority of respondents to the Transfer Survey positively viewed the credit transfer process to UM. Two-thirds of students noted they either agree or strongly agree that UM accepted all the credits that they thought would transfer and they were satisfied with the number of credits that transferred into UM. One-third of respondents indicated that they found the transfer process to be very difficult. Table 3 summarizes the responses from these transfer students.

Table 3: Percent of respondents who strongly agree or agree with the ease of transfer

| | Entire Sample (n=841) | 4-Yr. Transfers (n=354) | 2-Yr. Transfers (n=487) |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | "Strongly Agree/Agree" Percent | "Strongly Agree/Agree" Percent | "Strongly Agree/Agree" Percent |
| UM accepted all the credits I had expected would transfer.*** | 58 | 50 | 64 |
| I have found the transfer process very difficult.*** | 25 | 33 | 19 |
| I am satisfied with the number of credits that transferred to UM. | 64 | 59 | 67 |

Note: The response set for these questions include strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree.

*** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 4-year and 2-year institutions at the .001 level.

There appears to be differences in the responses between transfer students who previously attended 4-year and community college institutions. As displayed in Table 4, students who previously attended community colleges selected "strongly agree" or "agree" to being satisfied 14 percentage points higher than students coming from 4-year institutions. Community college students were also less likely to find the transfer process difficult, responding "strongly disagree" or "disagree" to that questionnaire item 14 percentage points lower than 4-year transfer students.

In addition to comparing these responses by the type of previous institution a transfer student attended, we compared location (in state vs. out of state) as well to see if current state policies assist students with articulating credits to UM. Table 4 summarizes these percentages. Overall, we found even greater differences when comparing students by the location of their previous institution. There are significant differences between the responses of students who came from in-state institutions when compared to out of state institutions for all three questions. In-state students were more satisfied with the transfer credit process. There was a 20% point response difference between in-state and out-of-state students responding "strongly agree" or "agree" to being satisfied with "the number of credits that

transferred” and “the number of credits [students] expected would transfer.” In-state students were also less likely to indicate that they found the transfer credit process to be difficult.

Table 4: Students who agree about ease of transfer by location of previous institution

| | <u>Entire Sample</u> (n=841) “Strongly Agree/Agree” Percent | <u>In state</u> (n=543) “Strongly Agree/Agree” Percent | <u>Out of state</u> (n=298) “Strongly Agree/Agree” Percent |
|--|---|--|--|
| UM accepted all the credits I had expected would transfer.*** | 58 | 65 | 45 |
| I have found the transfer process very difficult.*** | 25 | 19 | 35 |
| I am satisfied with the number of credits that transferred to UM.*** | 64 | 71 | 51 |

Note: The response set for these questions include strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree.

*** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from institutions outside of the state at the .001 level.

To better understand the differences by institution type and location, we looked to see if these students perceive that it will take them longer to graduate as a result of the transfer credit process. Table 5 displays the percentages by institution type and location indicating how many extra courses a student perceives it will take them to graduate from the time they transfer to UM. There are large differences between students from institutions within the state and outside the state. Nearly two-thirds of in-state students indicate that they will not need to take more courses as a result of transfer credits. Conversely, two-thirds of students transferring from non-Maryland institutions indicate they will need to take one or more courses due to the transfer process.

Table 5: Perceived number of courses students believe they need to repeat by college location ***

| Transfer students from institutions: | None | 1-2 courses | 3 or more courses |
|--|------|-------------|----------------------|
| In Maryland (in-state colleges & universities) (n=543) | 62 | 28 | 10 |
| Outside of Maryland (out-of-state colleges & universities) (n=298) | 26 | 43 | 31 |

*** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from institutions outside of the state at the .01 level.

Table 6 summarizes how students perceived the amount of time it would take them to earn a degree after transferring to UM. Students who transferred from institutions within Maryland are more likely to perceive that it will take them less than two years to graduate whereas students transferring from outside the state are more likely to indicate that it will take them more than three years.

Table 6: Perceived time until students reach degree from the time they start at UM by college location **

| Transfer students from institutions: | Less than 2yrs | 2-3 yrs | 3 or more yrs |
|--|----------------|---------|---------------|
| In Maryland (Instate colleges & universities) (n=543) | 32 | 42 | 26 |
| Outside of Maryland (Out-of-state colleges & universities) (n=298) | 26 | 36 | 38 |

** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from institutions outside of the state at the .01 level.

A similar perspective emerges when viewing the differences by a student's previous level of institution (community college or 4-year institution). Students attending community colleges appear to perceive that they need to take fewer courses as a result of lost credits through the transfer credit process and perceive faster time to attain a degree after transferring to UM. Table 7 summarizes the differences between students coming from 2-year and 4-year institutions in the perception of courses they need to re-take. As the table shows, there is a twenty percentage point difference in the number of students selecting "none" for this question with community college students believing they will not need to take additional courses. Four-year students are more highly represented in the group of students indicating that they will be required to take three or more courses. Table 8 shows similar differences in a student's perceived time it will take until they receive a degree after transferring to UM. Community college students are more likely to indicate two to three years and students transferring from four-year institutions are more likely to indicate three or more years.

Table 7: Perceived number of courses students believe they need to repeat by college type ***

| Transfer students from: | None | 1-2 courses | 3 or more courses |
|---|------|-------------|-------------------|
| Community colleges (2-year institutions) (n=487) | 58 | 30 | 13 |
| Bachelor's colleges (4-year institutions) (n=354) | 38 | 40 | 23 |

*** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions with those from 4-year institutions at the .001 level.

Table 8: Perceived time until students reach degree from the time they start at UM by college type ***

| Transfer students from | Less than 2yrs | 2-3 yrs | 3 or more yrs |
|---|----------------|---------|---------------|
| Community colleges (2-year institutions) (n=487) | 30 | 47 | 23 |
| Bachelor's colleges (4-year institutions) (n=354) | 29 | 31 | 40 |

*** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions with those from 4-year institutions at the .001 level.

Because a very high number of students transferring from in-state colleges are in community colleges, we conducted a follow-up analysis to see whether in-state colleges, community colleges, or both improved the perception of the transfer credit process. When conducting follow-up statistical analysis to control for the number of credits that transferred into UM and a student's perceived full-time/part-time

status, it appears that the community college/4-year college differences more significantly contribute to a student's perceived time until their degree than whether a student's previous institution was inside or outside of Maryland. Figures 1 and 2 chart the probability of taking three or more years to graduate from UM (according to a student's perception of the future) and the number of credits transferred to UM. These figures show that as the number of credits transferred to UM increases, the perception of staying at UM more than three years decreases. As shown in Figure 1, students who previously attended a 4-year college are more likely to perceive that it will take more time to get their degree. As more credits are

Figure 1: Probability of students perceiving longer time to degree by type of previous institution

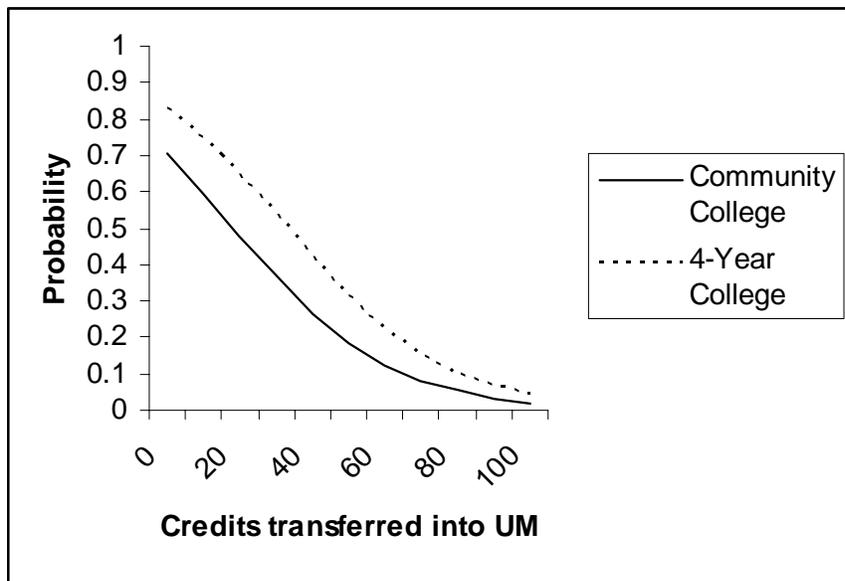
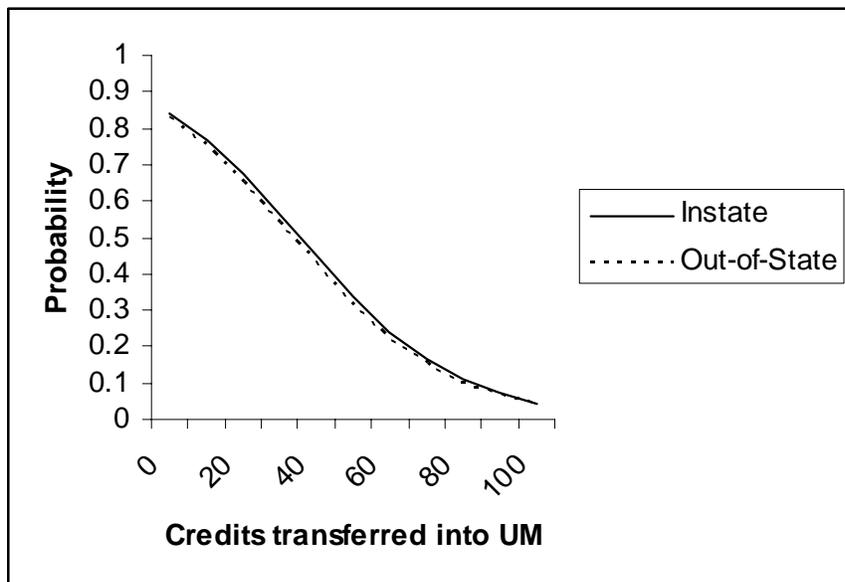


Figure 2: Probability of students perceiving longer time to degree by previous institution location



transferred in, this difference is reduced. Figure 2 shows that there is no difference between in the perception of time it takes to attain a degree between students coming from in-state and out-of-state institutions. Overall, it appears that students transferring from within Maryland and from community colleges are more satisfied with the transfer process. Community colleges (which prepare students for transfer) and credit articulation within the state may contribute to a more positive student experience with the transfer of credit. Though the data show that the location of a student's previous college (within Maryland or not) may contribute to transfer issues, institution type (2-year or 4-year) has a more significant relationship with a student's perception and satisfaction over the process. Though the majority students positively perceived the transfer process, nearly one-third of students are still indicating dissatisfaction.

Academics

Over time, the University of Maryland Student Survey (UMSS) has contained a series of questions that focused on a student's perception of a skill related to learning outcomes. We repeated these questionnaire items on the Transfer Student Survey with response options of "strong," "adequate," and "weak" for each outcome. Overall, transfer students reported feeling confident or "strong" in using electronic information resources and seeing relationships, similarities, and differences among ideas. These students reported feeling "weak" in areas that require an understanding of research designs and framing a research question. Table 9 lists the learning outcomes from the highest percent of students feeling "strong" to the lowest. (Note that perception of feeling "strong" in a skill does not indicate actual mastery of the skill. Conversely, a response where a student indicates they are "weak" can indicate that a student is actually weak in a skill or that they are competent in a skill but have low confidence).

Table 9: Perception of ability level in UM learning outcomes

| | Sample (n=841) "Strong" Percent | 4-Yr. Transfers (n=354) "Strong" Percent | 2-Yr. Transfers (n=487) "Strong" Percent |
|--|--|---|---|
| Using electronic information resources | 70 | 71 | 69 |
| Seeing relationships, similarities, and differences among ideas. | 70 | 74 | 68 |
| Interpreting graphs, tables, and/or formulas correctly | 54 | 56 | 53 |
| Writing effectively ** | 53 | 59 | 49 |
| Presenting and effective argument | 49 | 52 | 47 |
| Speaking effectively | 46 | 45 | 47 |
| Using quantitative methods to solve problems | 43 | 45 | 41 |
| Understanding various research designs * | 40 | 45 | 37 |
| Framing a research question * | 38 | 43 | 33 |

Note: The response set for these questions include strong, adequate, and weak.

* Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from 4-year institutions at the .05 level.

** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from 4-year institutions at the .01 level.

Three learning outcomes questions showed difference by the type of previous institution a student attended. There were community college and 4-year college differences in the response to *writing effectively*, *understanding various research designs*, and *framing a research question* items. For each question, students transferring from community colleges were less confident in their skills, responding “strong” nearly 10 percentage points less than students who transferred from 4-year colleges. Community college students, however, responded “adequate” at higher rates than 4-year students, so that if we were to combine the “strong” and “adequate” categories, the differences disappear. Another question asked how prepared students felt attending UM, and again, there were slight differences with community college student’s selecting “strongly agree” in less proportion than 4-year students. Table 10 summarizes the findings of this question.

Table 10: Percent of students who feel they are prepared for the academic demands at UM **

| | Strongly Agree/Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree/Disagree |
|---|----------------------|---------|----------------------------|
| Community colleges (2-year institutions) (n=487) | 73 | 17 | 10 |
| Bachelor's colleges (4-year institutions) (n=354) | 81 | 12 | 7 |

** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from 4-year institutions at the .01 level.

Next, we wished to compare transfer students with the students who were directly admitted to UM. Though these questions were repeated on the UMSS, the sample was not random and a direct percentage to percentage comparison is not possible. Instead, we compared the relative ranks between these two surveys using the data compiled for the University of Maryland Student Survey (2005). These ranks are displayed on Table 11. When comparing the Transfer Survey with the UMSS, most learning outcomes are ranked consistently. Students directly admitted to UM from high school seem to perceive that they are more skilled in using quantitative methods to solve problems than the transfer students in the Transfer Survey.

If faculty and staff were interested in developing programs or study sessions for transfer students, Appendix D provides the results from questions that ask if students were willing to attend study sessions organized by faculty and during what times. Ninety-five percent of transfer students indicated that they would attend a study session, and the best time to schedule those sessions would be weekday evenings from 5pm-10pm.

Overall, community college students perceive they are as confident in their abilities in six of the nine learning outcome questions as their 4-year counterparts. The three questions they perceive lower skill or confidence, though significant, are diminished when including those who responded “adequate.” These differences may be due to the differences of mission between the community college and the University of Maryland, which is more likely to emphasize research.

Table 11: Rank comparison of perceived “strong” abilities in UM learning outcomes†

| | <u>Transfer Students</u> (n=841) Rank | <u>Direct Admit†</u> (n=814) Rank |
|--|---|---|
| Using electronic information resources | 1 | 1 |
| Seeing relationships, similarities, and differences among ideas. | 1 | 2 |
| Interpreting graphs, tables, and/or formulas correctly | 3 | 3 |
| Writing effectively | 4 | 6 |
| Presenting an effective argument | 5 | 5 |
| Speaking effectively | 6 | 7 |
| Using quantitative methods to solve problems | 7 | 4 |
| Understanding various research designs | 8 | 8 |
| Framing a research question | 9 | 9 |

†Rankings for direct admit students come from the Transfer Student Report (2005), Campus Assessment Working Group (<http://www.umd.edu/cawg>). Data is from the 2004 University of Maryland Student Survey.

Social Transition

Transfer students report having some difficulty in the social transition to UM. As table 12 shows, about half students felt that they were able to respond “strongly agree” or “agree” to each of the four questions we asked about social adjustment. The other respondents either indicated that they did not agree or they neither agreed nor disagreed (neutral).

Table 12: Transfer students who “strongly Agree” or “agree” to their social adjustment to UM

| | <u>“Strongly Agree” or “Agree” Percent</u> |
|--|--|
| Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following: | |
| I was easily able to adjust socially to UM. (n=837) | 52 |
| I feel as though I am part of the UM community. (n=835) | 49 |
| I was easily able to meet people and make friends. (n=836) | 51 |
| I am satisfied with my involvement at UM. (n=837) | 49 |

Note: The response set for these questions include strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. Only the strongly agree and agree percentages are shown.

To better understand the reasons why transfer students may have a difficulty with the social life at UM, we asked a series of questions about factors that may negatively influence a student's transition. Table 13 lists factors that "negatively influenced" a student's transition. The top issue that negatively influenced a transfer student's transition was the commute followed by academics, employment, age, and to a lesser extent family and friends (it should be noted, however, that just over half of the respondents indicated that academics also positively influenced their transition). In a similar question, we also asked how some factors influenced a student's ability to become involved at UM. Table 14 displays those percentages. Again, academics and work are in the top of the list.

Table 13: Factors that negatively influence social transition to UM for transfer students

| Please note how the following influenced your adjustment: | "Negatively Influenced" Rank | "Negatively Influenced" Percent | "No Influence" Percent | "Positively Influenced" Percent |
|---|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| My commute (n=834) | 1 | 42 | 41 | 17 |
| Academics/coursework (n=836) | 2 | 23 | 24 | 53 |
| Employment (n=833) | 3 | 17 | 59 | 24 |
| My age (n=837) | 4 | 14 | 48 | 37 |
| Family (n=836) | 5 | 7 | 52 | 41 |
| Friends outside UM (n=837) | 5 | 7 | 49 | 44 |
| Friends at UM (n=837) | 7 | 3 | 35 | 62 |

Table 14: Factors that negatively influence involvement at UM

| Please rate how the following factors impacted your ability to become involved at UM: | "Negatively Impacted" Rank | "Negatively Impacted" Percent | "Did not impact" Percent | "Positively Impacted" Percent |
|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Other personal responsibilities (n=828) | 1 | 30 | 51 | 19 |
| Academics/coursework (n=834) | 2 | 27 | 30 | 43 |
| Work (n=831) | 3 | 24 | 56 | 20 |
| Feeling unwelcome (n=831) | 4 | 22 | 74 | 4 |
| Family (n=832) | 5 | 9 | 65 | 26 |
| Friends (n=831) | 6 | 6 | 41 | 53 |

To better understand if there were differences between transfer students in their transition, we compared students who transferred from community college with those from 4-year colleges to see if they have different experiences. For the most part, students coming from 2-year and 4-year colleges have similar social experiences aside from two exceptions: the commute and employment. Table 15 shows the differences in perception between students from community colleges and 4-year institutions. It appears that the commute disproportionately impacts students transferring from community colleges with nearly half of them responding that it “negatively influences” their social transition. Since the majority of community college students transferred from in-state colleges, one explanation for this is that these students remained at home (at least initially) and commuted whereas students transferring from out-of-state obtained housing in closer proximity to campus. Only one-third of transfer students coming from 4-year institutions indicated the same response. It also appears that community college students are more likely to perceive that their employment “negatively influences” their social transition compared to 4-year transfers.

Table 15: Differenced by institution type in how factors negatively influence social transition

| | <u>Total Sample</u> (n=841) | <u>4-year Transfers</u> (n=354) | <u>2-year Transfers</u> (n=487) |
|---------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | “Negatively Influenced” Percent | “Negatively Influenced” Percent | “Negatively Influenced” Percent |
| My commute ** | 42 | 36 | 47 |
| Employment * | 17 | 13 | 20 |

* Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from 4-year institutions at the .05 level.

** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from 4-year institutions at the .01 level.

Again, there are many similarities with how community college and 4-year transfer students perceive their social transition. Nearly half of all transfer students indicate that their social transition to UM was difficult. Two differences characterize students coming from different institution types. Community college transfer students seem more sensitive to the effects of a commute and employment upon the social transition, and 4-year transfer students seem less sensitive.

Finances

Overall, transfer students report similar sources of support for their education as students directly admitted to UM. Respondents indicated that parents/relatives and student loans were the two top “major” sources of funding for their education. As Table 16 shows, this is closely aligned with the findings of another CAWG survey administered in 2003 to non-transfers. Though there are slight differences in how students rank summer employment, current job, educational programs, and scholarships, the differences between the two surveys are small. Each of these items had percentages of students indicating “major” between 21 and 26%. We found differences in responses between students from community colleges and 4-year colleges in four sources of funding: parents/relatives, current job, educational programs, and credit cards. As Table 17 shows, community college students are significantly less likely to indicate

parents/relatives as a major source of funding. Students transferring from community colleges are more likely to indicate that a current job or educational programs were major sources of funding. For credit cards, community college students were more likely to indicate that they were a “minor” source of funding.

Table 16: Sources of a transfer student’s funding for college education

| Please indicate the degree to which each of the following is a source of funding for your college education: | Transfer Student (n=841) "Major" Source Percent | Transfer Survey (n=841) Rank | UMSS 2003 (n=1669) Rank |
|--|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Parents/relatives | 62 | 1 | 1 |
| Student loans | 42 | 2 | 2 |
| Summer employment | 26 | 3 | 3 |
| Current job | 21 | 4 | 6 |
| Educational programs (PELL, SEOG, private, etc.) | 21 | 4 | 5 |
| Scholarships | 21 | 4 | 3 |
| Bank loan | 14 | 7 | † |
| Personal credit card | 10 | 8 | † |

Note: The response set for these questions is major, minor, and none.

†Students were not given the opportunity to select a response for personal credit card and bank loan on the UMSS 2003. These results should therefore be interpreted with caution because students may have adjusted their responses on the other items in the list if these were included.

Table 17: Differences in institutional type in sources of funding for college education

| | <u>Sample</u> (n=841) "Major" Percent | <u>4-Yr. Transfers</u> (n=354) "Major" Percent | <u>2-Yr. Transfers</u> (n=487) "Major" Percent |
|------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Parents/relatives*** | 62 | 69 | 57 |
| Current job** | 21 | 16 | 25 |
| Educational programs (PELL, SEOG)* | 21 | 17 | 24 |

Note: The response set for these questions is major, minor, and none.

* Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from 4-year institutions at the .05 level.

** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from 4-year institutions at the .01 level.

*** Significant differences exist in the responses between transfer students who come from 2-year institutions inside of Maryland (in-state) with those from 4-year institutions at the .001 level.

For the most part, transfer students mirror the general campus population in how much they rely on sources of funding. Students from community colleges and 4-year college slightly diverged on four items indicating that community college students were more likely to rely on their own means rather than depend on family or relatives. It should be noted that, despite these differences, 57% of community college students still depend on their family as a “major” source of funding.

Responsibility

In the focus group study on the transfer student experience, “information and responsibility” was a major theme to emerge from the qualitative data. Transfer students from the focus group study indicated that there were gaps in the information they needed to succeed. They also assessed who was responsible for providing the information needed to transition socially or academically to campus. Students recognized that both they and the university had responsibility in the transition, but most indicated that the university could have done more. In the follow-up survey, we were interested in seeing if there is a relationship between how students assess responsibility for their transition to UM and their social and academic integration to the campus.

Overall, the data show that there is a relationship between the level of responsibility respondents place on “UM students” and social transition. As table 18 shows, students who put high responsibility for the transition process on students were more likely to “strongly agree” or “agree” that they have successfully socially adjusted to campus. Students who did not place high responsibility on UM students for the transition process were less satisfied.¹

Table 18: Perception of social transition by level of personal responsibility

| | <u>High Responsibility</u> “Strongly Agree/Agree” Percent | <u>Low Responsibility</u> “Strongly Agree/Agree” Percent |
|--|---|--|
| I was easily able to adjust socially to UM. | 72 | 48 |
| I feel as though I am a part of the UM community. | 70 | 45 |
| I was able to easily meet people and make friends at UM. | 77 | 46 |
| I am satisfied with my involvement at UM. | 68 | 45 |

Note: The response set for these questions is strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree. High responsibility was determined through a composite measure with an individual score of 1 standard deviation above the mean for the composite. Questions that were used to develop the composite measure include: I believe it is a UM student’s responsibility to learn how to get involved at UM, I believe it is a UM student’s responsibility to locate housing, I believe it is a UM student’s responsibility to develop his/her academic plan, and I felt that I was responsible for my own transition to UM.

¹ Significant results come from a regression analysis of a social integration composite developed using questions in Table 18 and a responsibility composite using the following questions: I believe it is a UM student’s responsibility to learn how to get involved at UM; I believe it is a UM student’s responsibility to locate housing; I believe it is a UM student’s responsibility to develop his/her academic plan; and I felt that I was responsible for my own transition to UM. The alphas for the composites are .536 and .894 respectively with significance at the .001 level.

When we attempted to look at the relationship between responsibility and a student's academic performance, the results were different. Even controlling for a number of variables², students placing high responsibility on "UM students" for their transition do not perform any better or worse in terms of entry GPA or cumulative GPA than students who place less responsibility on "UM students".

² Controls included number of semesters enrolled and transfer GPA.

How to Use the Data & Limitations

While not all the data may be relevant to your unit or department, we encourage you to use those elements that are. Some suggestions for use of the data include:

- Review and discuss findings with colleagues. Share this report with others in your college, department or office in order to inform them of current findings about the experiences of UM juniors and seniors who participated in this study. Discuss how these findings confirm or refute your perceptions of the upper division student experience.
- Clarify the data with focus groups. Engage students in small discussion groups to gain further information about topics of interest to your department.
- Look for the gaps between importance and satisfaction. Determine where students' expectations are not being met as a way to create an improvement agenda for your unit.
- Allow data to help inform budget expenditures or cutbacks. Data can be used to help guide decisions about how to prioritize use of funds to meet students' needs and concerns.
- Determine areas for further analysis. CAWG can assist departments, units, and colleges by providing data or conducting relevant subgroup analyses.

A number of limitations should be acknowledged in this report. Though the data are generalizable to the transfer students at the University of Maryland, they do not reflect the perceptions of all transfer students beyond this context. Future studies may use the data in this report to inform future inquiries beyond this context. Additionally, most of the statistics used in this report are descriptive in nature, and caution should be used not to overstate the data presented. The authors of the report are continuing to review the data from this large survey and welcome feedback for future directions of study.

Appendix A: Methodology

In order to generalize the findings of this study to the entire transfer student population at the University of Maryland, we chose a random sample of 2,446 out of a possible 6,219 transfer students to take the survey. We created a web survey that required students to log in using their directory ID and password. If a student consented to take the survey, we were able to connect background institutional data to their survey responses. UM’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the procedures and questionnaire items for this study.

We utilized three contact methods requesting student participation in order to reduce the number of respondents we were unable to contact. We contacted students with a postcard, three emails, and one telephone call informing them of the study (see Appendix B). Table 18 displays details the timeline for the survey. We offered a drawing for twenty \$50 gift certificates to Target or Best Buy as an incentive for participation in the study partially paid for by a grant from the Maryland Association of Institutional Research.

Table 19: Transfer survey timeline

| Day | Task | Student Response [†] |
|--------|---|-------------------------------|
| Day 1 | Survey Online | |
| | Post Card sent via first-class US Mail to student’s local address | 5 |
| Day 4 | Email #1 sent to students | 396 |
| Day 7 | Email #2 sent to students | 171 |
| Day 11 | Telephone calls to students begin ^{††} | 82 |
| Day 15 | Telephone calls to students end | |
| Day 18 | Email #3 sent to students | 187 |
| Day 20 | Survey closes | |

[†] Includes only eligible respondents.

^{††} Approximately three-quarters of students received personal telephone calls. One-quarter received an automated recorded message requesting their participation in the study.

Appendix B: Communications

Post Card

| | |
|---|---|
|  <p>UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND</p> | <p><i>Your Fellow Transfer Students need your help!</i></p> |
| | <p>We need your assistance in making the transfer student experience better for you and transfers to come! The Campus Assessment Work Group (CAWG) is conducting a survey to determine how UM and other college campuses can improve the transfer experience.</p> |
| | <p>We will conduct a drawing of gift certificates for students willing to participate in the survey. This incentive includes:</p> |
| | <p>Twenty \$50 gift certificates to either Target or Best Buy</p> |
| | <p>To participate, visit the following website and log-in. Then follow the instructions: [Enter Web URL Here]</p> |
| | <p>You will get a reminder email about this survey in the next few days!</p> |
| | <p>Questions? Call or write us at: cawg@umd.edu (301) 405-5590</p> |

Telephone Call/Message Script

Telephone Message:

Hello! I am calling for <student name>. I am <name> from the University of Maryland, and I am calling to encourage you to participate in a survey of transfer students at UM. Hopefully you have received notices in the mail and on e-mail to take the survey. I would like to assure you that we really care about your responses, and that the information you give us will help us improve the experience of transfer students at UM. For your trouble, if you participate we will enter you in a raffle that will award \$50 gift certificates to Target or Best Buy to twenty students. Please go to the website <web address>. Thank you!

Telephone Conversation:

Hello, I am calling for <student name>.
I am <name> from the University of Maryland, and I am calling to encourage you to participate in a survey of transfer students at UM. Have you received notices on e-mail to take the survey?

[If no] Let me check the e-mail address we have on file; we can send you a notice if we have the wrong one.

[If yes] Those notices must fill up your mailbox!

I would like to assure you that we really care about your responses, and that the information you give us will help us improve the experience of transfer students at UM. For your trouble, if you participate we will enter you in a raffle that will award \$50 gift certificates to Target or Best Buy to twenty students. Would you like the website address to go now?

[If yes] <web address>.

[If no] OK, thanks for considering. I'll take your name off of our list.

Thank you for your time!

Email Text

SUBJECT: Take Transfer Survey/Enter Raffle for Gift Certificate

Dear University of Maryland Transfer Student:

We need your assistance in making the transfer student experience better for you and transfers to come! The Campus Assessment Work Group (CAWG) is conducting a survey to determine how UM and other college campuses can improve the transfer student experience.

As an incentive, we will conduct a drawing of TWENTY \$50 gift certificates to either Target or Best Buy for students willing to participate in the survey.

If you choose to participate in this survey, all of your responses will be kept strictly confidential; your name will not be identified at any time. The survey takes approximately **15 minutes** to complete.

To participate in the study:

Click on this link to enter the study website: [Web URL here]

1. Select "Login" and enter your Directory ID or UID
2. After logging in, follow the directions on the screen to complete the survey.

Please complete the survey within the next 48 hours. If you have questions about the survey, please contact Sharon La Voy, Associate Director in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning at (301) 405-5590 or cawg@umd.edu.

Sincerely,

Dr. Scott Wolpert

Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies for Transfer Students

University of Maryland

Opt-out Option: If you do not wish to participate in this study and you do not wish to receive further reminders, please respond to this email and you will be removed from our distribution list.

Appendix C: Transfer Survey

Note: Items with shaded text are items that were included for students who have transferred to UM within the past academic year. These questions were excluded in the surveys given to all other transfer students.

ONLINE CONSENT FORM

Responses after reading the online consent form approved by the IRB:

- a. I consent to take the Transfer Student Survey
- b. I do not wish to participate

TRANSFERRING TO UM

1. Please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

- a. I had a clear understanding of the admission requirements for my first choice of a major
- b. I was aware of the requirements for entering a limited enrollment program before applying to UM
- c. When I applied to UM, I knew which credits would transfer and which would not
- d. UM accepted all the credits I had expected would transfer
- e. I have found the credit transfer process to be very difficult
- f. I am satisfied with the number of credits that transferred into UM
- g. I was satisfied with the process of applying to UM
- h. I believe it is primarily my responsibility to follow-up my UM application

2. When applying to UM, how satisfied were you with the personal contact you received from the following (Satisfied / Neutral / Dissatisfied / (Additional Spaces) I did not have personal contact):

- a. Academic Department at UM
- b. Academic Advisor
- c. Admissions Office at UM
- d. Financial Aid Office at UM
- e. Housing Staff (Department of Resident Life or Off Campus Housing)
- f. UM staff visiting my previous institution

3. Were you accepted into your first choice of major? (Y/N) (SKIP PATTERN: If no, go to question 5)

4. Which statement best describes the admission decision for your first choice of major at UM?

- a. I was not accepted into my first choice of major because my GPA was too low
- b. I was not accepted into my first choice of major because I had too many credits to be considered
- c. I was not accepted into my first choice of major because I did not complete the courses required by the time of admission
- d. I was not accepted into my first choice of major because of an administrative error
- e. I was not accepted into my first choice of major for another reason
- f. I am not sure why I was not accepted into my first choice of major

5. **How many class(es) do you or did you have to repeat because UM did not accept a course(s) taken at your previous institution? (None / 1-2 / 3-4 / 5+) (SKIP PATTERN: If “None” skip to question 7/9 depending on survey version)**
6. **Please indicate the reason(s) why you had to repeat courses (Check all that apply):**
- The grade in the transfer course was too low to transfer
 - UM did not accept a course because UM did not count a similar course as equivalent
 - I was unable to provide additional information requested for UM’s equivalency evaluation
 - ARTSYS (the web-based statewide articulation system) was not correct
 - UM’s Transfer Credit center website was not correct
 - Other/None of the above
7. **When did you find out which credits would transfer to UM?**
- Before I committed to attending UM
 - Before I attended orientation but after I committed to attending UM
 - During orientation
 - During my first semester at UM
 - Other: _____
 - I don’t remember
8. **Please indicate your satisfaction with the following online resources you may have used during the application process (Satisfied / Neutral / Dissatisfied / (Additional Spaces) Did not use/Was not aware of resource):**
- Online admissions application
 - Admissions section of Testudo to check application status
 - Housing Enrollment/Confirmation section of Testudo to check on on-campus housing
 - Off campus housing locator
 - Financial Aid section of Testudo to apply for and check aid status
 - UM’s Transfer Credit Website
9. **Did you attend an orientation session prior to your first semester at UM (Y/N)? (SKIP PATTERN: If no skip to advising)**

ORIENTATION

10. **Please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)**
- I was able to sign up for all the classes I was eligible for when I registered at Orientation
 - Overall, I was satisfied with my orientation session.
 - I received enough information about financial aid during orientation
 - If given the opportunity, I would have attended an earlier orientation session.
 - I had the opportunity to attend an earlier orientation session
11. **Were you aware that you would be taking a Math Placement test at Orientation? (Y/N/I was not required to take the math placement/Don’t Remember)?**
12. **Orientation was the first time I received information about (check all that apply):**
- The availability of on-campus housing
 - The availability of off-campus housing
 - My Financial Aid options

- d. The major I was admitted to
- e. What credits would transfer to UM

13. During orientation, academic advisors provided me with accurate information in the following areas: (Strongly Agree/Agree/Neutral/ Disagree/Strongly Disagree/Not Applicable)

- a. Math placement
- b. English requirements
- c. Major requirements

ADVISING

14. In what UM college/department have you received most of your academic advising? (choose one)

- a. Letters and Sciences (undeclared/undecided)
- b. College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
- c. School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation
- d. College of Arts and Humanities
- e. College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
- f. Robert H. Smith School of Business
- g. College of Computer, Mathematical, and Physical Sciences
- h. College of Education
- i. A. James Clark School of Engineering
- j. College of Health and Human Performance
- k. College of Journalism
- l. College of Chemical and Life Sciences
- m. Academic Achievement Program
- n. Department of Intercollegiate Athletics
- o. Unsure
- p. Other campus unit (please specify): _____

15. Please answer the following questions based on your advising experiences IN THE COLLEGE/DEPARTMENT YOU SELECTED ABOVE (Strongly Agree/Agree/Neutral/ Disagree/Strongly Disagree/Not Applicable)

- a. I know how to contact an advisor in my college/department
- b. I am pleased with the academic advising I have received
- c. Academic advisors have shown concern for me as an individual
- d. Academic advisors have provided me with accurate information
- e. Academic advisors have helped me outline academic choices that would allow me to graduate in a reasonable amount of time
- f. My academic advisor was helpful
- g. My advisor was able to explain what is required of my major
- h. I expect to have an academic advisor help me with academic planning
- i. I expect that I'll receive guidance if I decide I am unhappy with my major
- j. I have prepared for advising in advance by bringing questions and materials to discuss

16. Since attending UM, I have been a: (Part-Time Student / Full-time student / Combination of Full and Part time depending on the semester)

- 17. From the time I began at UM, I expect to receive my bachelor's degree in (less than 1 year/more than 1 but less than 2 years/more than 2 but less than 3 years/3 years or more/do not expect to receive a bachelor's degree)**
- 18. Where did you receive the most advising about the major(s) you might be interested in? (Select top 3 sources you received major advising)**
- a. Previous institution
 - b. UM orientation
 - c. Faculty advisors here at UM
 - d. Counseling Center staff at UM
 - e. Career Center staff at UM
 - f. Other UM staff member
 - g. Self-help from a UM website
 - h. Parent or family member
 - i. Another student
 - j. Other

ACADEMICS

- 19. Please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)**
- a. I felt that my previous institution adequately prepared me academically for UM
 - b. I feel adequately prepared for the academic demands here
 - c. I have the study skills I need to be a successful student
 - d. I know where to get help on campus with reading and study skills
 - e. The level of academic rigor at UM is about the same as my previous institution.
 - f. Within the last semester, I did not have any interest in forming any study groups.
 - g. Within the last semester, I wanted to join a study group but I was never presented the opportunity.
 - h. Within the last semester, I knew enough people in my classes to form a study group.
 - i. I am glad that I am in my current major
- 20. For each item, indicate if you are: weak, adequate, or strong with your ability in:**
- a. Writing effectively
 - b. Speaking effectively
 - c. Presenting an effective argument
 - d. Framing a research question
 - e. Using electronic information resources (e.g., internet, databases, e-journals)
 - f. Seeing relationships, similarities, and differences among ideas
 - g. Interpreting graphs, tables, and/or formulas correctly
 - h. Using quantitative methods to solve problems
 - i. Understanding various research designs and approaches
- 21. I believe I need assistance in the following:**
- a. Writing effectively
 - b. Speaking effectively
 - c. Presenting an effective argument
 - d. Framing a research question
 - e. Using electronic information resources (e.g., internet, databases, e-journals)
 - f. Seeing relationships, similarities, and differences among ideas
 - g. Interpreting graphs, tables, and/or formulas correctly

- h. Using quantitative methods to solve problems
 - i. Understanding various research designs and approaches
 - j. Data/information searches on-line
 - k. Computer skills
 - l. Tutoring in a specific content/course
- 22. If your professor organized a special study session outside of class to assist you in preparing for an exam you were worried about, would you attend? (Select 1)**
- a. Yes, I would attend regardless of the scheduled time
 - b. Yes, but my attendance would depend on my schedule
 - c. Probably not, my schedule would not allow it
 - d. No, study sessions don't interest me
- 23. What is the best time to schedule study sessions based on your current schedule? (check all that apply)**
- a. Weekday mornings (8am-12n)
 - b. Weekday afternoons (12n-5pm)
 - c. Weekday evenings (5pm-10pm)
 - d. Weekend mornings (8am-12n)
 - e. Weekend afternoons (12n-5pm)
 - f. Weekend evenings (5pm-10pm)
 - g. University designated study days

FINAL QUESTIONS

- 24. Please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following: (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)**
- a. It was easy to obtain financial aid information
 - b. I did not receive financial aid information until after I had made my decision to transfer here
 - c. Financial aid did not influence my decision to attend UM
 - d. Cost was one of the most important factors influencing my decision to transfer to UM
 - e. I am concerned about my ability to finance my college education
 - f. The cost of attending this university is reasonable
 - g. I am often surprised by fees I did not expect to pay for UM services (i.e., lab supplies, print accounts)
- 25. Please indicate how many hours per week you do the following: (0/No hours/1-10 hours/11-20 hours/21-30 hours/More than 30 hours) (SKIP PATTERN: If "No Hours" for both, then skip to question 27)**
- a. Work at an off-campus job
 - b. Work at an on-campus job
- 26. Please indicate the degree the following are reasons for your employment: (Not a reason / Somewhat / Very much a reason)**
- a. Help pay for my college education (tuition, books)
 - b. Personal expenses (rent, gas, etc.)
 - c. Family obligations
 - d. Earn extra spending money
 - e. Gain general work experience
 - f. Gain work experience related to my future career

27. Please indicate the degree to which each of the following is a source of funding for your college education: (None/Minor/Major)

- a. Parents/relatives
- b. Current job (including work study)
- c. Summer employment
- d. Educational programs (PELL, SEOG, private, etc.)
- e. Scholarships (private, federal, school, etc.)
- f. Student loans (Perkins, GSL/Stafford, etc.)
- g. Bank loan
- h. Personal credit card

28. Please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following: (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

- a. I was easily able to adjust socially to UM
- b. I feel as though I am a part of the UM community
- c. I was easily able to meet people and make friends at UM
- d. I am satisfied with my involvement at UM
- e. I felt that I was responsible for my own transition to UM
- f. The University needs to do more to help transfer students in transition.

29. My adjustment to UM was ____ I expected it would be.

- a. easier than
- b. more difficult than
- c. about the same as

30. Please note how the following influenced your adjustment (Positively influenced/No Influence/Negatively Influenced)

- a. Academics/Coursework
- b. My Age
- c. My Commute
- d. Family
- e. Friends at UM
- f. Friends outside UM
- g. Volunteering
- h. Employment

31. Please rate how the following factors impacted your ability to become involved at UM? (Positively impacted / Did not impact / Negatively impacted)

- a. Academics/Coursework
- b. Family
- c. Friends
- d. Work
- e. Other Personal Responsibilities
- f. Feeling unwelcome

32. Please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following: (Strongly Agree / Agree / Neutral / Disagree / Strongly Disagree)

- a. I believe it is UM's responsibility to help students get involved at UM
- b. I believe it is a UM student's responsibility to learn how to get involved at UM
- c. I believe it is UM's responsibility to locate housing for students

- d. I believe it is a UM student's responsibility to locate housing
- e. I believe it is UM's responsibility to develop a student's academic plan
- f. I believe it is a UM student's responsibility to develop his or her academic plan
- g. If I had it to do over, I would still transfer to UM
(SKIP PATTERN: If a student selects "Disagree/Strongly Disagree", route them to the following question): Which of the following reasons would influence your decision to not transfer to UM again (check all that apply):
 - a. The transfer credit process
 - b. The financial aid options
 - c. The academic demands
 - d. A lack of housing
 - e. The campus climate
 - f. The campus is too big
 - g. The social life at UM
 - h. Other

Thank you for participating in the Transfer Student Survey. Your responses will be of great assistance to improving the transfer student experience.

Appendix D: Scheduling Study Groups for Transfer Students

Given the findings of the focus group study that students have difficulty coming to campus to participate in activities, we included a question on the survey to assist faculty and staff in organizing study group experiences. Table 20 provides the results from the first question asking if transfer students would participate in a study group. Ninety-five percent of transfer students indicated that they would participate in a study group if it were offered.

Table 20: Transfer student willingness to attend study sessions with faculty

| If your professor organized a special study session outside of class to assist you in preparing for an exam you were worried about, would you attend? | Percent |
|---|---------|
| Yes, I would attend regardless of the time. | 32 |
| Yes, but my attendance would depend on my schedule. | 63 |
| Probably not, my schedule would not allow it. | 3 |
| No, study sessions do not interest me. | 2 |

Since two-thirds of students indicated that they would only attend contingent on their schedule, we looked at another question that suggests the best times to schedule a study group. This question is displayed in table 21 and only includes students who indicated they would attend a study session. Most of the time periods listed in the survey were not convenient for most transfer students. Weekday days, weekday afternoons, and weekends were unavailable for most transfer students based upon the schedule they had for that semester. Even the university-designated study day was unavailable for most students. The only day and time where students indicated they were available to attend was weekday evenings (from 5pm-10pm).

Table 21: Transfer student availability to attend study sessions with faculty

| What is the best time to schedule study sessions based on your current schedule (check all that apply): | Percent "Yes" |
|---|---------------|
| Weekday mornings (8am-12n) | 12 |
| Weekday afternoons (12n-5pm) | 28 |
| Weekday evenings (5pm-10pm) | 62 |
| Weekend mornings (8am-12n) | 16 |
| Weekend afternoons (12n-5pm) | 28 |
| Weekend evenings (5pm-10pm) | 26 |
| University designated study days | 20 |

Appendix E: Campus Assessment Working Group

The Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) was created in 1996 and is currently chaired by Robert E. Waters, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Special Assistant to the President. CAWG is dedicated to building a culture of evidence at the University of Maryland. One way of accomplishing this task is by administering large-scale surveys to cross-sections of undergraduates on a regular basis, thereby gathering evidence regarding the student experience from multiple perspectives. CAWG presently consists of four subgroups covering various aspects of the student experience.

More information about CAWG is available on the website: www.umd.edu/cawg or from:

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