

SNAPSHOT

CAWG

of
Student Experiences

Student Finances

Survey	Population	Usable survey responses
BSS 2004	4,179	1,997
UMSS 2005	1,787	1,287
BSS 2007	4,225	1,074
BSS 2009	4,193	2,100
UMSS 2010	2,304	1,762

Highlights:

- ◆ The majority of upperclass students rely on their parents as a major source for funding their college education.
- ◆ Twenty-nine percent of freshmen respondents reported never speaking to their parents about finances.
- ◆ Eighty-eight percent of freshmen respondents and 31% of upperclass respondents worked neither on nor off campus in academic year 2010.

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This Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) Snapshot is based on five surveys: the Beginning Student Survey (BSS) 2004, 2007 and 2009 and the University of Maryland Student Survey (UMSS) 2005 and 2010. The BSS is administered to freshmen eight weeks into their first semester in courses such as ENGL 101 and UNIV 100. The UMSS is administered to juniors and seniors in Professional Writing classes. Throughout this report, academic year 2005 refers to survey results from the BSS04 and UMSS05, and academic year 2010 refers to survey results from the BSS09 and UMSS10. Additionally, junior and senior UMSS respondents are referenced as upperclass students and first-time, full-time BSS respondents are referenced as freshmen throughout this report. Survey populations and responses are provided in the table on the left.

What influences the decision to attend UM?

In the BSS07, 52% ranked cost among their top three reasons for attending, which topped the list of twelve factors including size of institution, reputation, location, and the diversity of the student body. In the BSS09, these

Percent of freshmen who chose the following as one of the top three factors that contributed most to their decision to attend UM	2007	2009
Cost of attendance	52%	54%
Reputation of University in general	53%	51%
Close to home	48%	45%
Reputation of particular academic discipline/major	41%	44%

Source: BSS07 and BSS09

Note: Other factors offered were size of institution, far from home, geographic region (Washington, DC Metro area), diversity of student body, living and learning programs, existence of particular academic program/major, activities that complement academics.

percentages did not shift as much as might have been expected given the recent recession. However, in the BSS09, 56% of students agreed that the economic recession negatively influenced their family's financial situation.

How do upperclass students fund their education?

2005: The degree to which each of the following is a source of funding for your college education	Parents/relatives	Educa-tional Grants	Scholar-ships	Student Loans	Bank Loan	Personal Credit Card(s)	Current Job
Not a source	14%	66%	55%	52%	84%	82%	48%
Minor source	15%	13%	22%	16%	7%	13%	36%
Major source	71%	21%	23%	33%	9%	5%	16%

Source: UMSS05; some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding

2010: The degree to which each of the following is a source of funding for your college education	Parents/relatives	Educa-tional Grants	Scholar-ships	Student Loans	Bank Loan	Personal Credit Card(s)	Current Job
Not a source	11%	68%	54%	57%	84%	86%	62%
Minor source	14%	12%	24%	15%	8%	11%	28%
Major source	75%	20%	22%	29%	9%	3%	10%

Source: UMSS10; some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding

When upperclass students were asked to indicate their sources of college education funding in the UMSS, their sources do not appear to have changed much between 2005 and 2010.

- ◆ The majority of students rely on their parents as their major source, 71% reporting this in 2005, and 75% in 2010. This holds true for every racial/ethnic category, although percentages vary.
- ◆ The next highest combination of categories includes the different kinds of financial aid: educational grants, scholarships, and student loans. A range of 20 to 33 percent of respondents listed each of these as major sources of funding, with almost no change between 2005 and 2010.
- ◆ A relatively low percentage of students list personal credit cards as a *major* source of funding in 2010 (3%), but 14% list credit cards as either a major *or* minor source of funding, down from 18% in 2005.
- ◆ Considering the recent recession, we might expect more students to be in financial need; however, more respondents in 2010 indicated that a current job was *not* a source of funding, in comparison to 2005 (62%, up from 48%).

There were significant differences among racial and ethnic groups with regards to sources of funding for the upperclass students reporting on the UMSS in 2010.

- ◆ As mentioned above, parents were reported as a major source of funding for the majority of respondents at 75% overall. However, 56% of Black/African American students reported the same.
- ◆ Black/African American students report relying on financial assistance (such as scholarships and loans) other than parents as a major source of funding at higher rates than other groups. For example, 48% of Black/African American students report student loans as a major source of funding, in comparison to 28% overall.
- ◆ At 11%, White students report that educational grants are a major source significantly less than Black/African American (41%), Asian American (30%) and Hispanic (38%) students.
- ◆ Twenty-one percent of Hispanic respondents reported a current job as a major source of funding, compared to 10% of respondents overall.

How do freshmen students fund their education?

- ◆ About 60% of freshmen report that more than 60% of their college expenses are paid through their parents or relatives.
- ◆ About 90% of freshmen report that they pay 40% or less of their own college expenses.

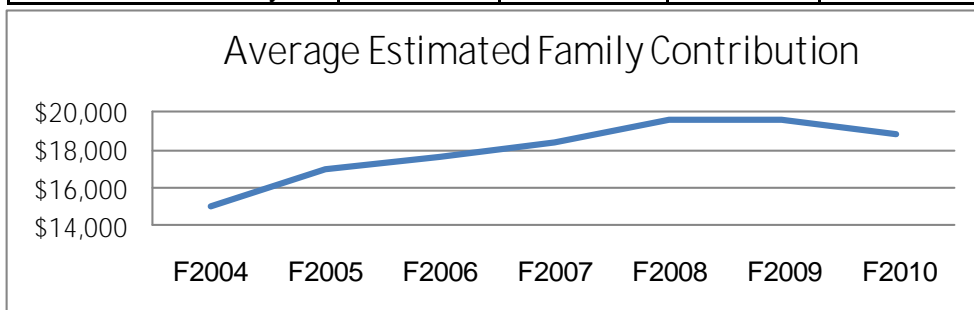
2009: Approximately what percentage of your college expenses are paid for through...	Financial aid	Parents or relatives	Me personally
0-20%	42%	18%	83%
21-40%	15%	10%	8%
41-60%	11%	14%	4%
61-80%	12%	19%	2%
81-100%	19%	39%	3%

Source: BSS09; some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding

Have students' financial aid and family contribution changed over time?

Financial aid for undergraduates enrolled full-time*	Fall 2004		Fall 2009	
	Offered	Accepted	Offered	Accepted
Scholarship	30%	30%	33%	33%
Grant	27%	27%	26%	26%
Loan	54%	39%	55%	38%
Federal Work Study	8%	6%	7%	6%

For all undergraduates enrolled full-time, between academic years 2005 and 2010, the percentage of students who were offered and those who accepted scholarships, grants, loans, and federal work study has stayed relatively constant. However, the estimated family contribution increased from the fall of 2004 to the fall of 2008 and then slightly decreased in the fall of 2010.



Source (table and graph): University of Maryland, Enrollment Services Operations

*Note: Data not from survey responses.

How often do freshmen students discuss finances with their parents?

Of the list of topics for conversation, including academics, physical and emotional well-being, social life, involvement, and the future, students spoke least often regarding finances. For freshmen in academic year 2010, when asked how often they talk about finances with their parents:

- ◆ The largest percentage report talking to them monthly (43%).
- ◆ Twenty-six percent reported speaking to them weekly, and 3% reported daily conversations.
- ◆ Twenty-nine percent reported never speaking to their parents about finances.
- ◆ Black/African American students report talking to their parents about finances much more often than their peers (40% weekly vs. 26% over-all, and 8% daily vs. 3% over-all). No other racial/ethnic differences emerged.
- ◆ No differences by gender or residency emerged.

Question to consider:

When students talk to their parents about finances, are they asking for money to spend on the weekend, or bigger-picture issues such as tuition?

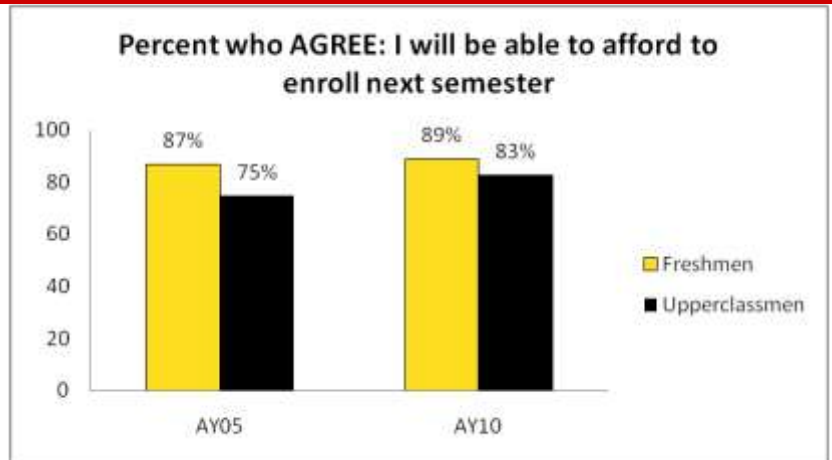
Are students concerned about financing their college education?

For academic years 2005 and 2010, students reported their concern about financing their college education and their ability to afford to enroll. In summary:

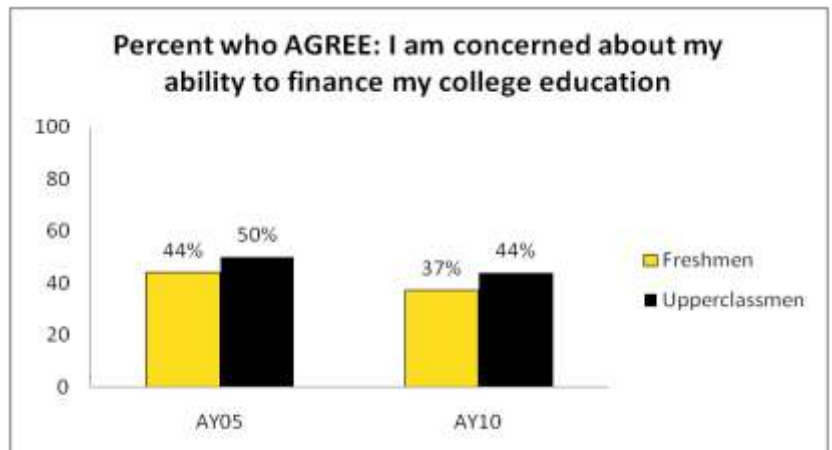
- ◆ Freshmen respondents reported slightly less concern about their ability to finance their education than upperclass respondents.
- ◆ Comparing data across the two academic years, students reported slightly less concern about financing their education and greater confidence in their ability to enroll the next semester in AY10 than in AY05.

Differences by demographics for Academic Year 2010*:

- ◆ Both freshmen and upperclass Black/African American students were significantly more likely to agree that they were concerned about financing their college education.
- ◆ For freshmen only, Asian/Pacific Islander students were significantly more likely to agree that they were concerned about financing their education, and for upper-class students only, Hispanic students were significantly more likely to be concerned.
- ◆ Conversely, White students follow the opposite pattern; both freshmen and upperclass students were less likely to be concerned about financing their education. There were no significant group differences for students' ability to afford to enroll next semester.
- ◆ There were no significant differences on the two items with regard to state residency or gender.



Source: BSS04, UMSS05, BSS09, and UMSS10



Source: BSS04, UMSS05, BSS09, and UMSS10

Question to consider:

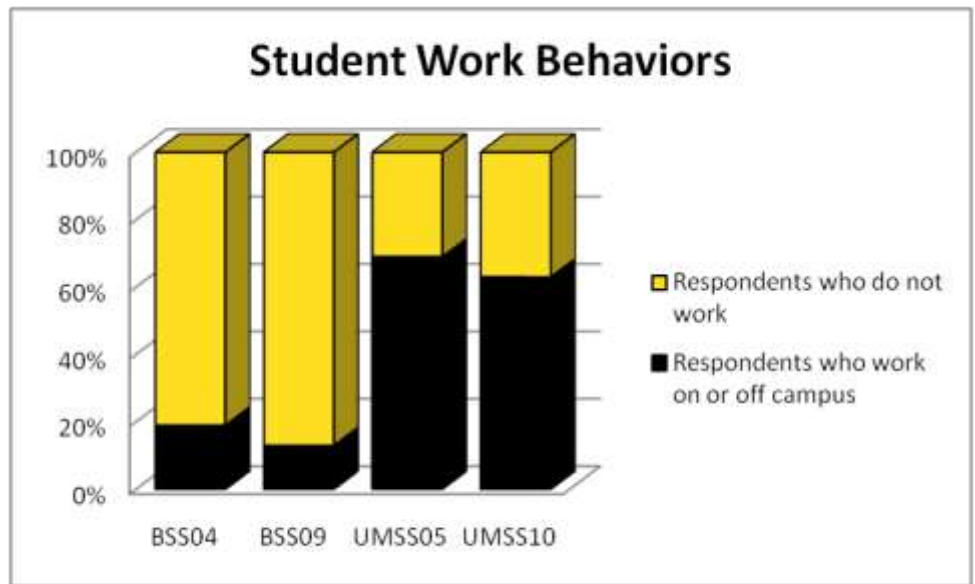
Why are students less concerned about their ability to afford and finance their college education than they were in 2005?

BSS09 participants were matched with their spring 2011 official enrollment status to analyze the difference between students who discontinued their enrollment (n=102) and those who continued their enrollment (n=1,954). There are no significant differences between the two groups of students as to whether they agree or disagree that they are concerned about their ability to finance their college education. However, 46% of students who discontinued their enrollment, AGREED that they were concerned about their ability to finance their college education, while 36% of student who continued AGREED with the same statement.

*For racial/ethnic groups, some groups (American Indian, Hawaiian, Foreign, Unknown and individuals who identify as Two or More Races) are not included due to small headcounts that make statistical analyses unreliable.

What percent of students work on campus and why do they work?

- ◆ Eighty-one percent of respondents from the BSS04 worked neither on nor off campus, compared to 88% in the BSS09. Similarly, 38% of UMSS05 respondents worked neither on nor off campus compared to 31% in the UMSS10.
- ◆ During academic year 2010, both freshmen and upperclass students were asked how important, or to which degree, specific reasons were for their decision to work. The two items reported below regard paying for their college education and personal expenses.



Source: BSS04, UMSS05, BSS09, and UMSS10

Question to consider:

Last year, students were working less and they were less concerned about financing their education compared to previous years—why?

Upperclassmen: The degree to which the following are reasons for your employment (n=1,096)*	Help pay for my college education	Personal expenses
Not a reason	38%	9%
Somewhat a reason	34%	26%
Very much a reason	28%	65%

Source: UMSS10

Freshmen: How important are each of these reasons in your decision to work? (n=274)*	Pay for my college education	Pay for personal expenses
Not important	38%	16%
Somewhat important	22%	32%
Very important	40%	52%

Source: BSS09

*Note: Only students who work one hour or more per week are included.

- ◆ About two thirds of upperclass students who work indicate that personal expenses were very much a reason for working.
- ◆ Over a third of upperclass students who work indicate that helping to pay for their education was not a reason for their employment.
- ◆ Over half of freshmen who work indicate that personal expenses were a very important reason for working.
- ◆ Over a third of freshmen students who work indicate that paying for their college education was not important in their decision to work.

Recent Issues:

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Student Behavior and Responsibility in the Classroom

Upcoming Issue:

Parental Involvement

Campus Assessment Working Group
(CAWG)

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