

TRANSFER STUDENTS

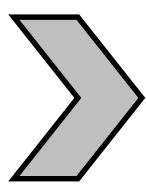
University of Maryland

2015 – Issue 3, June

This Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) Snapshot reports findings on transfer students' experiences throughout their transfer process into the University of Maryland. The data included represent results from a one-time, online survey of transfer students administered by the CAWG Retention and Completion (RetComp) subgroup. Students who transferred into the University of Maryland in Fall 2013 or Spring 2014 were sent an email inviting them to complete the online survey in April 2014.

Out of the 2,723 students who transferred into Maryland during this time, 629 (23%) completed the survey – 55% were White: U.S.; 13% were Black or African American: U.S.; 12% were Hispanic: U.S.; 11% were Asian: U.S.; 5% were Two or More Races: U.S.; 3% were Foreign; and 1% were classified as Other including American Indian or Alaska Native: US and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: U.S., and Hawaiian. Additionally, 51% were female while 49% were male; 74% transferred from 2-year, while 26% transferred from 4-year institutions.

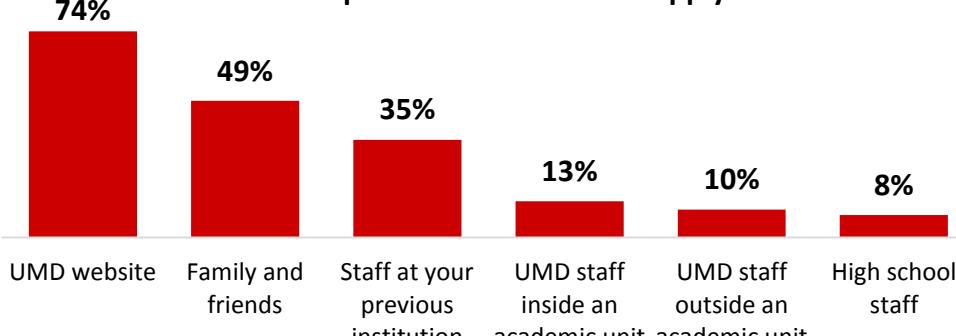
The data below represent only the responses of survey respondents, not all UMD students; therefore, use caution when generalizing. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.



Inside the numbers: CAWG found a number of statistically significant differences between the way that transfers from 2- versus 4-year institutions answered questions. This symbol is beside questions where a difference was found; actual differences are reported on page 9. If this symbol is not listed beside a question, there was no statistically significant difference in the way respondents answered.

Transfer student experiences prior to coming to UMD

Where did you get your information about UMD throughout the transfer process? Select all that apply.



- Nearly three quarters (74%) of transfer students report using the UMD website as a source of information about the University during the transfer process.
- Many transfer students rely at least in part on sources of information outside of the University, including family and friends (49%), staff at a previous institution (35%), and high school staff (8%).

Did you know?

30%

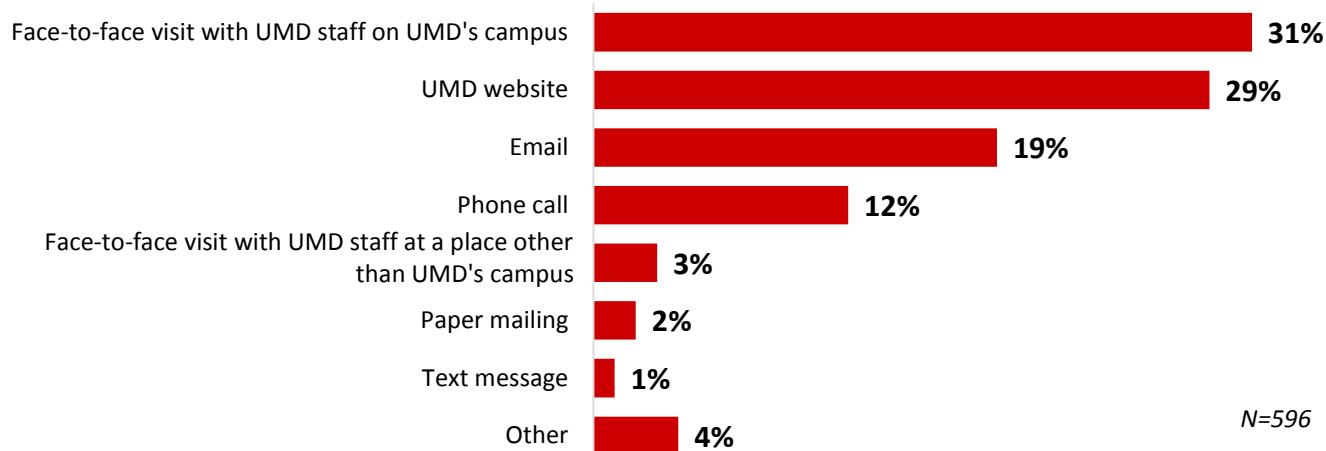
of respondents knew they wanted to attend UMD before they even started at another institution.

70%

decided to transfer only after starting at another institution.

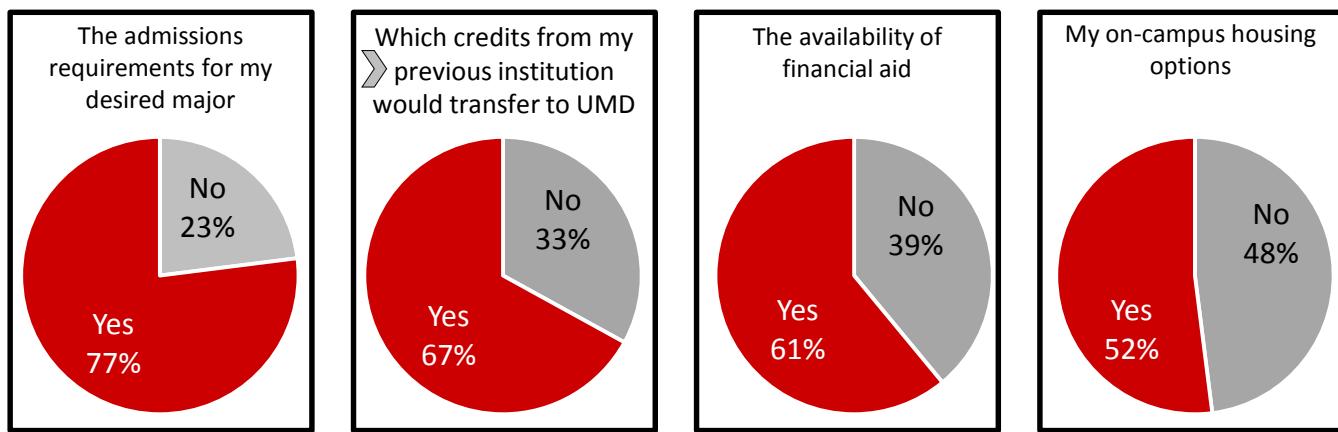
N=596

For me, the most effective medium of communication regarding the UMD transfer process was:



- When asked to identify the most effective medium of communication about the transfer process, 31% identified a face-to-face visit with UMD staff on the University campus and 29% identified the UMD website.
- Only 29% found the UMD website to be the most helpful but it was the most common source of information as 74% of respondents reported using it.
- NOTE:** There is a dissonance between previous charts as 13% reported getting information from UMD staff inside and 10% reported getting info from staff outside an academic unit in the first table. However, a greater percentage (31%) reported that a face-to-face visit with UMD staff on UMD's campus was most helpful in the second table. There is a chance students may not have read the question completely or remembered their experiences accurately.

Between the time I submitted my application to UMD and enrolled at UMD, I understood:



- Nearly one-quarter (23%) of respondents did not understand admissions requirements for their desired major and one-third (33%) did not understand which credits would transfer.

Question to consider: Concepts like financial aid and on-campus housing often are considered on a case-by-case basis, making questions related to them difficult to answer clearly and concisely on a website. How can we be more clear/helpful to transfer students on these issues?



Comparing enrollment at previous institution with UMD

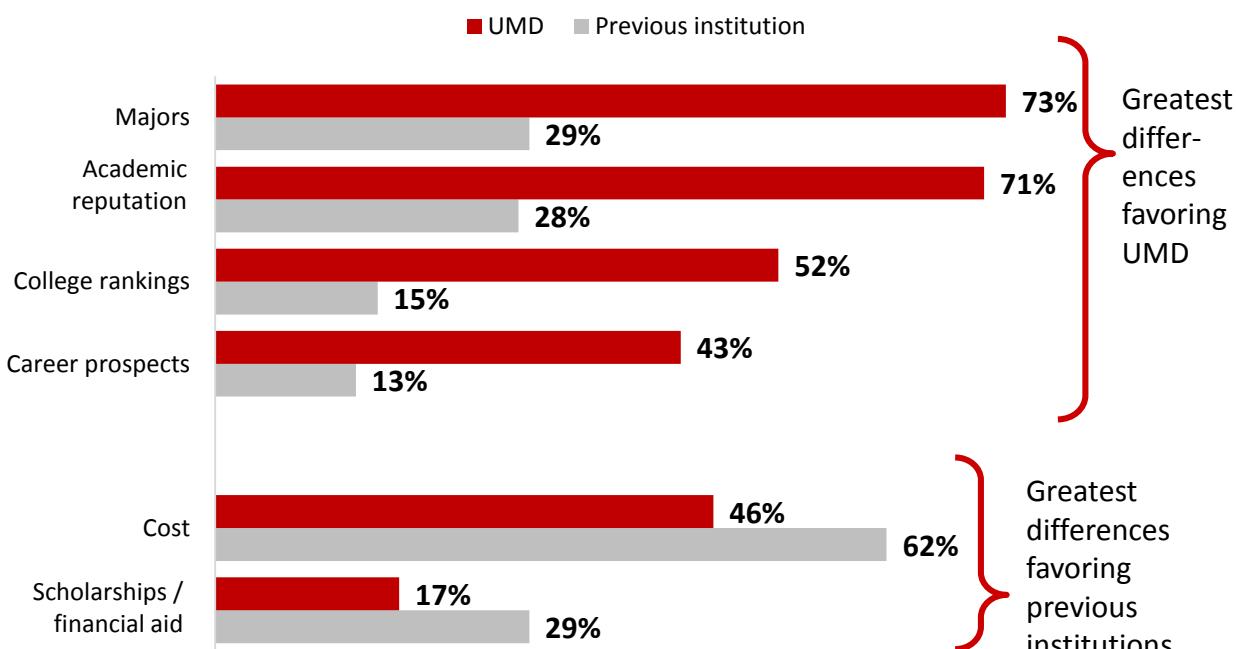
Which of the following influenced your decision to attend UMD or your previous institution?

Most common* factors influencing school decision	Top reasons for selecting	Top reasons for selecting
	UMD	previous institution
	1. Majors (73%)	1. Location (75%)
	2. Location (71%)	2. Cost (62%)
	3. Academic reputation (71%)	
	4. Type of institution (61%)	
	5. College rankings (52%)	

N=603

N=603

*Lists include factors selected by at least 50% of respondents. Options that fewer than 50% of respondents selected include: high school guidance counselor recommendation, family recommendations, proximity to family/friends, friends' enrollment, perceived rigor of academics, perceived ease of academics, potential for career prospects, co-curricular opportunities, campus life, athletics, scholarship offers / financial aid, specific transfer agreement, and other.



- More than 7 out of 10 respondents listed location of institution as a reason to attend their previous institution. Similarly, at least 7 out of 10 listed majors, location of institution, and academic reputation as reasons to attend UMD.
- Fewer than 10% of respondents listed guidance counselor recommendation and perceived ease of academics as a reason to attend UMD or their previous institution.
- Some highly ranked reasons for coming to UMD are markedly lower for the previous institution; these include majors, reputation, rankings, and career prospects. Some highly ranked reasons for attending the previous institution are markedly lower for UMD; these include cost and scholarships/financial aid.

Respondents spent similar amounts of time on these activities at their previous institution vs. UMD

How students report spending their time at UMD

	0 hours	1 to 10 hours	11 to 20 hours	More than 20 hours	N
Working on campus for pay	89%	5%	6%	1%	559
Participating in co- or extracurricular activities	41%	50%	8%	1%	561
Taking care of family obligations	23%	53%	13%	11%	565

- There were virtually no differences in the amount of time students spent on the following activities at their previous institution compared to UMD: working for pay on campus, participating in co- or extra-curricular activities, and taking care of family obligations.
- There were differences, however, in hours devoted to schoolwork where respondents reported spending more hours at UMD; and in hours working off campus, where they spent more hours at their previous institution.

Did you know? 89%

of respondents reported working on campus for pay for **0 hours** per week while enrolled at UMD. N=559

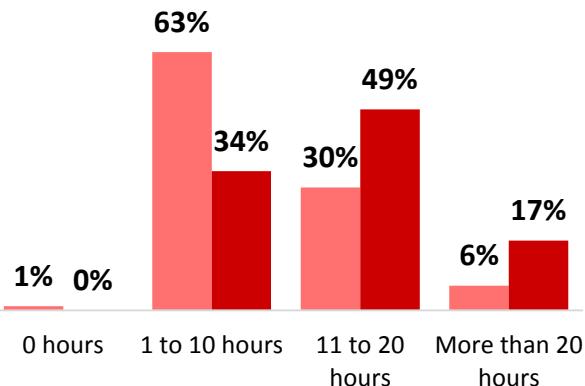
Did you know? 11%

of respondents reported taking care of family obligations for **more than 20 hours** per week while enrolled at UMD. N=565

Respondents spent different amounts of time on these activities at their previous institution vs. UMD

Time spent on schoolwork (outside of class)

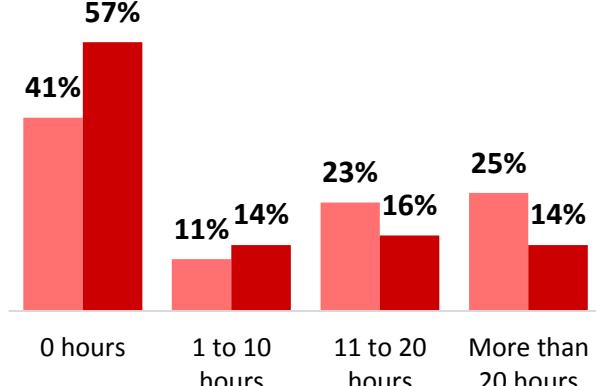
■ Previous institution ■ UMD



N=567-568, depending on item

Time spent working off campus for pay

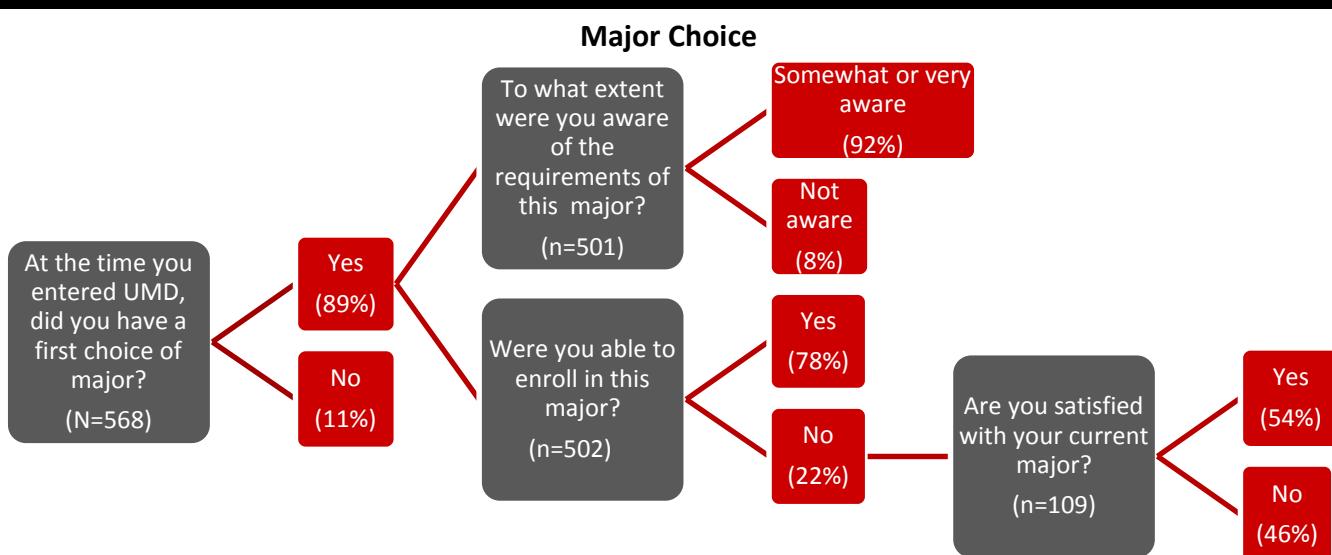
■ Previous institution ■ UMD



N=559-562, depending on item

- In a typical week, transfer students on UMD campus spend more time doing school work outside of class compared to what they spent their previous institutions. While 36% spent 11 or more hours on school work outside of class at their previous institution, 66% spent more than 11 hours while at UMD.
- Approximately 30% of respondents work more than 10 hours a week off campus (16% work 11-20 and 14% work more than 20 hours).

Transfer student experiences at UMD



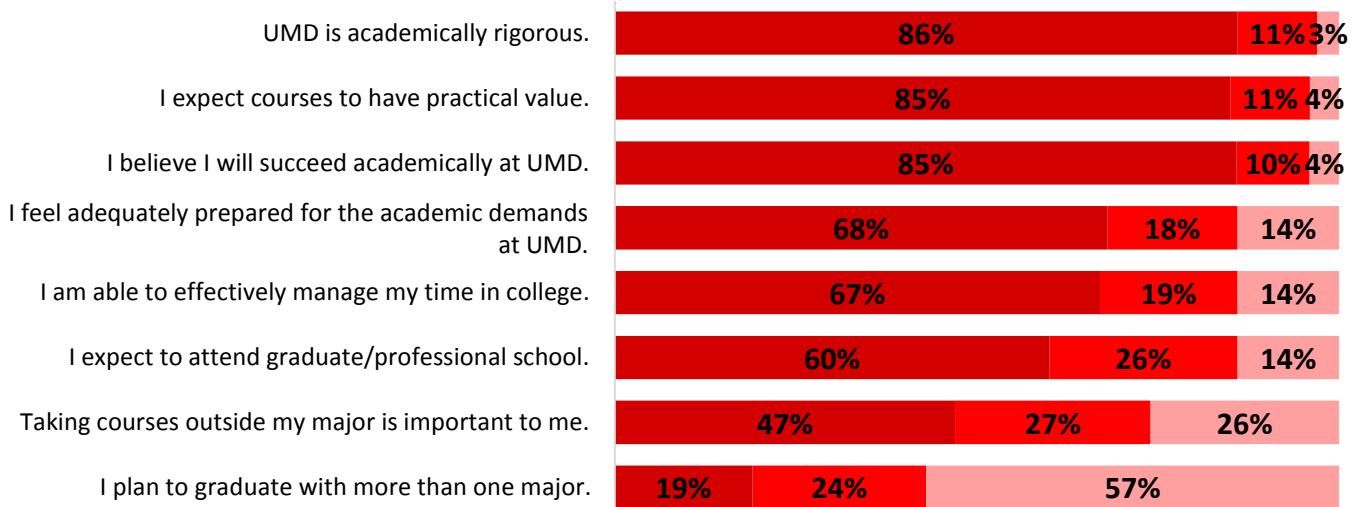
- 89% indicated they had a first choice of major when they entered UMD; of those 22% were not able to enroll in this major.

Question to consider: The most common reason students came to UMD was for majors. How do we support transfer students who come to UMD but are unable to enroll in the major that they want?



UMD Academics

■ Agree or strongly agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree or strongly disagree



N=561-563, depending on item

- Despite the majority feeling that UMD is academically rigorous (86%), many still report they believe that they will succeed academically (85%).

Question to consider: While 68% feel adequately prepared for the academic demands at UMD, a higher percentage (85%) believe that they will succeed academically. How will students who don't feel adequately prepared succeed?



UMD Community

■ Agree or strongly agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree or strongly disagree

I want to make lifelong connections while at UMD.



I plan to make a positive contribution to the UMD community while I am here.



I am adjusting to the social life of college.



I feel as if transfer students fit in here.



N=554-558, depending on item

- The vast majority of respondents (77%) want to make lifelong connections; however, only 58% of respondents are adjusting to the social life of college and 46% agree that transfer students fit in here.

UMD Miscellaneous

■ Agree or strongly agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree or strongly disagree

I would like to participate in an internship while I am a student at UMD.



➤ I want to participate in a study abroad program while I am a student at UMD.



I would be interested in living in on-campus housing.



N=469-555, depending on item

- Students are more interested in participating in an internship (86%) than they are in studying abroad (48%).

Did you know?

27%

of respondents
have a mentor.

64%

of respondents
want a mentor.

9%

of respondents
don't have and don't
want a mentor.

N=577

Question to consider:

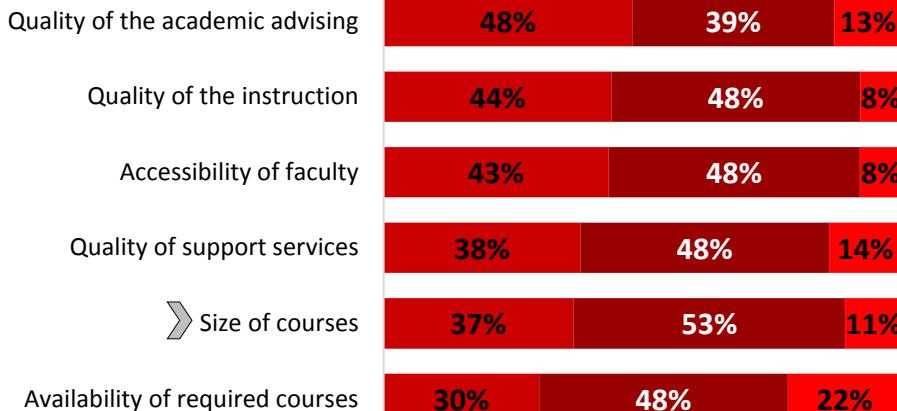
How can we help transfer students connect with mentors?



Transfer student academic satisfaction and sense of belonging

Academic satisfaction

■ Very satisfied ■ Somewhat satisfied ■ Not at all satisfied

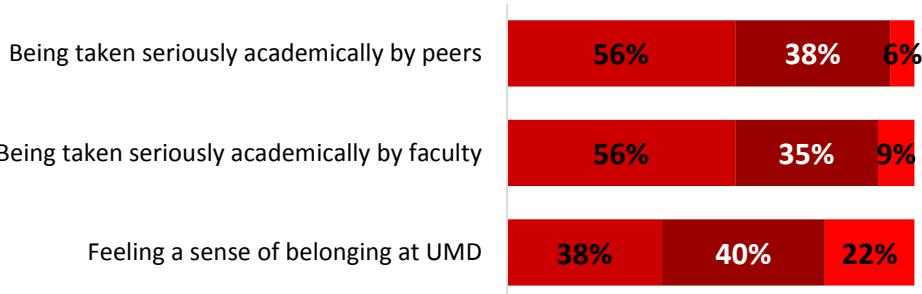


N=563-566

- 22% reported they were not at all satisfied with the availability of required courses.
- Fewer than half of respondents report high satisfaction with any of these factors.

Collegiality

■ Very satisfied ■ Somewhat satisfied ■ Not at all satisfied



N=564-565

- While 56% are very satisfied that they are taken seriously academically by faculty and peers, only 38% are very satisfied with feeling a sense of belonging at UMD.
- Nearly one-in-four respondents (22%) are not at all satisfied when asked if they feel a sense of belonging at UMD.

Question to consider: What is the relationship between a student's academic identity on campus and their sense of belonging?



Did you know?

96%

of respondents plan to complete their bachelor's degree at UMD.

1%

plan to complete their bachelor's degree at another university.

2%

are not sure if they will complete their bachelor's degree. N=555

Did you know?

91%

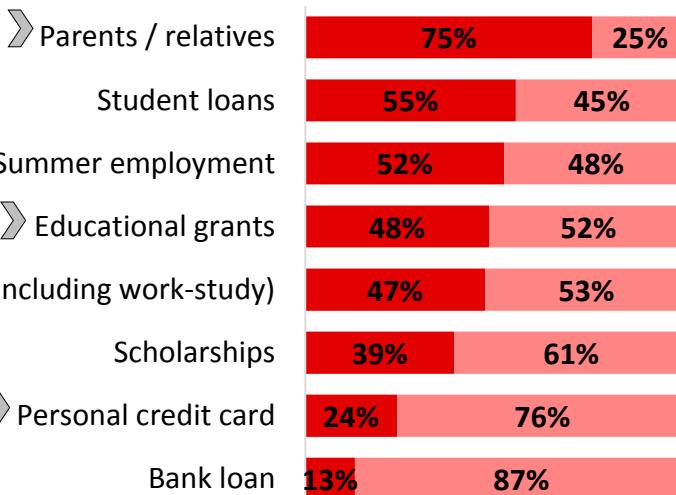
of respondents agree or strongly agree that their family encourages them to continue their college education.

N=554

Transfer student finances

Indicate the degree to which the following sources fund your college education:

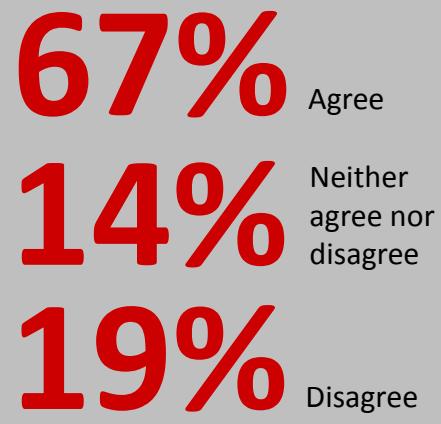
■ A major or minor source ■ Not a source



N=513-541, depending on item

Did you know?

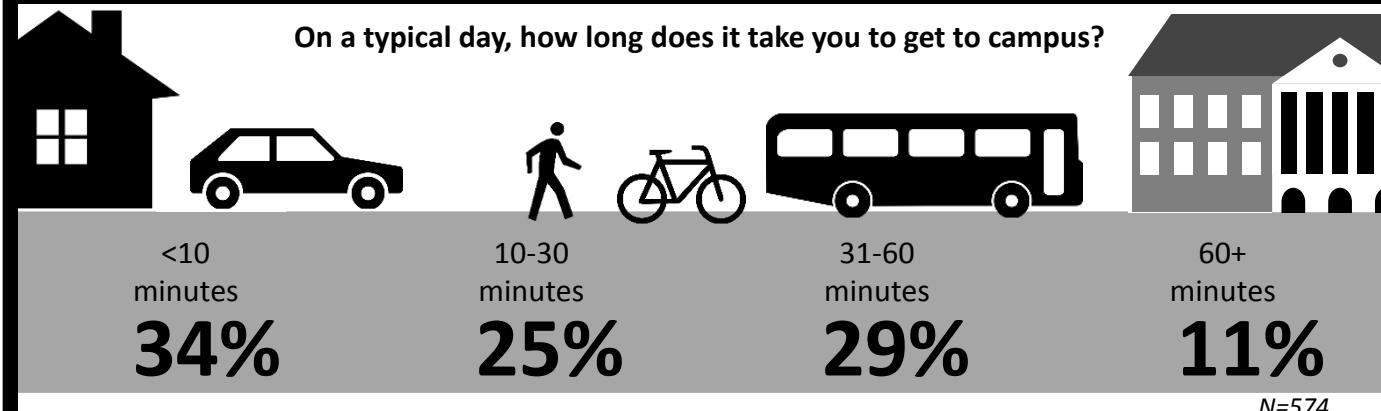
"I am concerned about my ability to finance my college education."



- Parents/relatives are the most common source of funding for respondents (75%).
- The two least common forms of funding are personal credit cards and bank loans, which often have higher interest rates than other forms of student loans.

Transfer student commute

On a typical day, how long does it take you to get to campus?



- While 60% of respondents have a commute less than 30 minutes, 62% of respondents indicate that they would come to campus more if their commute were shorter.

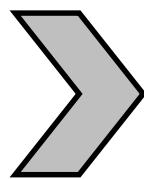
Did you know?

62%

of respondents agree or strongly agree that they would come to campus more if their commute were shorter.

N=430

Inside the numbers



For some questions, respondents who transferred to UMD from a 2-year institution answered differently than those who transferred from a 4-year institution. Though CAWG ran analyses for all questions, only questions that yielded statistically significant differences are reported here.

		All respondents	Respondents from 2-year institutions (N=466)	Respondents from 4-year institutions (N=163)
Page 2	Question: Between the time I submitted my application to UMD and enrolled at UMD, I understood which credits from my previous institution would transfer to UMD. Response: Agree or strongly agree	67%	73%	52%
Page 6	Question: I want to participate in a study abroad program while I am a student at UMD. Response: Agree or strongly agree	48%	43%	62%
Page 7	Question: How satisfied are you with the size of courses at UMD? Response: Very satisfied	37%	34%	44%
Page 7	Question: How satisfied are you with being taken seriously academically by faculty at UMD? Response: Very satisfied	56%	53%	64%
Page 8	Question: Indicate the degree to which the following sources fund your college education. Response: A major or minor source <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/relatives • Educational grants • Current job • Personal credit card 	75% 48% 47% 24%	71% 51% 50% 27%	84% 39% 39% 17%
Page 8	Question: I am concerned about my ability to finance my college education. Response: Agree or strongly agree	67%	70%	57%

Demographic Differences Explained

Differences (tested with chi square analyses) are reported where the responses across the demographic categories (e.g., male and female) are significantly different than expected relative to the overall response pattern. For example, if 70% of all respondents agreed with a statement, we would expect 70% of both males and females to agree, if sex were not a factor. However, if we found a significant difference with only 65% of males agreeing, then we would report that “fewer males than expected” agreed with the item.

Text Responses

The final survey question was “What can UMD reasonably do to better support transfer students?” Select but representative responses are included here. They are printed verbatim. Given that the total sample represents 23% of students who transferred into UMD during Fall 2013 or Spring 2014, and 393 respondents (62% of respondents) took time to type comments, use caution when generalizing beyond this group. Responses are grouped into theme, which are presented in the order of frequency. Names and other identifiers mentioned in the comments were removed to maintain respondent confidentiality.

64 comments related to academic advising / mentorship

- I felt a little overwhelmed at the academic rigor at UMD compared to my previous institution. I feel I could have been integrated better if I had had some kind of mentoring program*
- I think UMD did a great job with the transfer process.. but I think the initial advising for classes can be better. I wasn't entirely sure how to register for classes on my own how to pick classes that were right for me.*
- maybe have a senior in that major help the transfer student out and be guide for the semester.*
- Provide a better way of reaching faculty members or mentors. I was very fortunate because I joined T2T, and they helped me navigate my way around campus and also, showed me the DOS and DON'TS...*

46 comments related to admissions / orientation

- Provide a more in depth guided tour of not just the school but the majors. Knowing all the different resources both academic and extracurricular would make a transfer student feel more at home...*
- The best way for UMD to help transfers is to make the process as clear as possible to all transfers. Including deadline and enrollment dates.*

46 comments related to housing

- Changing the housing priorities for transfer students to have a better chance of getting on-campus housing would help a lot, especially in order for transfer students to feel like they belong to the UMD community.*
- It would be helpful if there was a dorm/on-campus housing (like a floor in a dorm) specifically for transfer students (like how there are "freshman dorms")*

41 comments related to transfer community / support

- Have more opportunities for transfers to meet each other. I live in Maryland, so I already knew many friends who went here, but if I hadn't, I feel like I would have been very nervous about making friends and meeting people....*
- Reach out to the students more. I feel as if I'm on my own. When I reach out for support in all areas of being a student each part of the campus doesn't really know what the other part is doing. There is no personal support like a community college givs.*

40 comments related to credits

- Making sure that students are informed about which credits will transfer from their previous institution and how that will affect them.*

35 comments related to money financial aid / scholarships

- Financial aid has been the biggest struggle I have had to deal with. More scholarship opportunities, perhaps on a level that is comparable to what is available to freshmen, would be incredibly helpful...*
- I am an Independent student and I have had the absolute worst time with financial aid. I have to submit an appeal each year and by the time it is granted I have missed every deadline for aid.*
- Provide more opportunities for financial aid such as grants and scholarships, offer more on campus job opportunities*

34 comments related to social integration / community

- Help to ease the transition into UMD as much as possible with workshops, peer assistants, and especially programs like Transfer2Terp!*
- Provide better information about how to get involved on campus. There are some events that happen on campus that I had no idea were happening at the time and was upset to realize what I had missed.*

30 comments related to registration and class schedules

- ...the transfer students should be put into the lower level courses first. They are hard to get into later.
- Offer classes at different times and days. As a transfer student, I am lacking credits since not all of mine transferred over. Also, as a commuter student, who works, so I can afford school, class availability lacks. I need [two courses] which are both offered at the same time, same day.
- Please remove barriers to signing up for courses... Not being able to sign up for courses before advising can delay a timely graduation if we can't find reasonable course schedules because they're all filled up.

27 comments related to instruction / academics

- I wish professors understood how difficult it is to be a transfer student. We have our school responsibilities, but we also have an entire home life to be responsible for and they are never understanding because they don't think we as college students have other obligations.
- Provide better and more clear instructions on what is expected on assignments. The classes are too large and rely to heavily on "curving" which makes it almost impossible to gauge your performance throughout the semester...
- Transfer students come from totally different environment than high school students, so it is more diverse (international, working adults filled with family responsibilities, and other impending factors) More TAs and flexible hours for study sessions are crucial.
- Work with Maryland System Colleges for a harmony and uniformity in the courses... Also faculty have to stop discriminating two year college educations.

27 comments related to communication

- Communicate better as to what needs to be done before attending the school. If it wasn't for a friend I had on campus that had transferred the semester before I would not have known who to contact or what things I needed to get done before moving in.
- makes the website easier to use. I still have no idea how to properly switch majors because each department is designed differently. A bit of parallelism would help

16 comments related to transportation / parking / commuting

- I wish they had more events during the day. I take 3 buses and get home at 7pm everyday and I leave campus 4:50 to catch the Shady Grove bus. It's hard for me because it's increased my stress and I thought UMD would be different. I thought there'd be more opportunities to keep you active on campus.
- Let them know ALL the resources they have through email. Buses that drive outside college park needs to run more frequently so people can participate in a club.

12 comments related to limited enrollment programs (LEPs)

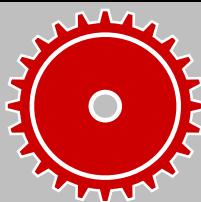
- I came here with the intent of majoring in [an LEP program], but was unable to, due to underlying requirements I was completely unaware of until orientation. Now I will be stuck with a degree I don't want.
- I think they can be more transparent in the admission process. When accepted, I wasn't sure if I had gotten into the [LEP program I applied for] or not.

10 comments related to general resources

- It can be difficult to find the necessary resources during the first semester, and something like a crash course guide that is given or easy to access would be helpful. Also, registration and dealing with registration blocks can be challenging as it is more difficult at a large university vs a CC.
- Let us know about all the resources there are available to us instead of having us hunt for them ourselves.

17 comments related to topics other than those listed above

- Topics included: tuition billing, military student support, quality of facilities, computer support, and others.



The Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) regularly gathers and exchanges information about UMD student and alumni experiences. The group is charged with developing a campus "Culture of Evidence" in which data and assessment can inform campus decision making. Its three subgroups focus on freshman experiences, junior/senior student experiences, and retention and completion efforts. For more information, to view past reports, or to join a CAWG subgroup, please visit www.umd.edu/cawg.