

Beginning Student Survey: Fall 1998

Prepared by the Campus Assessment Working Group

Studies of Entry Subgroup

This report summarizes the results of the 1998 Beginning Student Survey (BSS). The survey was administered in late October and early November, 1998. The BSS was developed by the Studies of Entry Subgroup¹ of the Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG), with input from various campus clients.

The administration was achieved through the assistance of various instructors who provided class time in late October or early November, 1998, and other administrators who helped distribute surveys via other methods during that time. Surveys were administered in the following courses: ENGL101, EDCP108O/UNIV101, EDCP108N, HONR100/HONR100G, and ANSC101. Surveys were also distributed through the Academic Achievement Programs/IED, and both College Park Scholars and students living in hotels through the residence hall system.

Students responded directly on printed forms designed for optical scanning. An instruction sheet was provided for instructors and administrators to read, or to be included in a letter that accompanied the survey. Previous years' administrations indicated 20 minutes were required for the survey to be completed. Copies of the survey and the instruction sheet follow the data tables.

Surveys were visually inspected prior to scanning; stray marks were erased and responses were darkened as needed. Reviews for potential sources of error associated with patterns of missing values revealed no significant concerns.

The survey provided a space for students to write their Student Identification Number. When voluntarily provided, it was used to link with official university records to include demographic information in the analysis.

The survey was distributed to 3944 students (as determined by class and residence hall rosters). Of those, 2853 surveys were returned, representing a 72% response rate. Of those, 2354 (83%) included a voluntarily provided Student Identification Number and were thus matched with institutional data. Of those, 2144 were first-time full-time freshmen, representing 54% of the original sample.

Survey items are included in their entirety in this report. Each survey table represents the valid responses of first-time (non-transfer) full-time freshmen excluding missing and "does not apply" responses. The N noted on each item reflects the number of valid responses for that item.

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Demographic Information

UM Survey Respondents as compared to UM Population of First-Time Full-Time Freshmen

Gender	UM Respondents	UM Population
	%	%
	N = 2144	N = 4067
Male	46.7	50.4
Female	53.3	49.6

Race	UM Respondents	UM Population
	%	%
	N = 2144	N = 4067
Native American	0.3	0.0
African American / Black	13.6	12.7
Asian American	13.7	14.1
Hispanic American	5.6	4.9
Caucasian American / White	61.8	62.6
Foreign	1.4	1.4
Unknown	3.7	4.0

State Residency	UM Respondents	UM Population
	%	%
	N = 2144	N = 4067
Maryland Residents	59.9	65.4
Non-Residents	40.1	34.6

High School GPA	UM Respondents	UM Population
	%	%
	N = 2122	N = 4067
Less than 2.5	1.4	1.4
2.5 - 2.999	7.8	8.7
3.0 - 3.499	35.1	35.6
3.5 and Higher	55.7	52.8

Residence	UM Respondents %	UM Population %
	N = 2144	N = 4067
Residence Halls	84.4	79.8
Off Campus (Commuters)	15.4	10.2

Credits Attempted	UM Respondents %	UM Population %
	N = 2144	N = 4067
Extended Load (12 - 14 hours)	54.9	55.3
Catalogue Load (15 - 20 hours)	45.1	44.7

1998 Beginning Student Survey

Please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following. (Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)		UM Respondents					
		SA	A	U	D	SD	N
1.	I've made campus friends.	56.1	34.1	6.9	2.0	0.9	2129
2.	I've been able to get the classes I wanted.	31.5	45.1	14.1	7.8	1.6	2125
3.	I am earning the grades I want.	6.8	28.2	32.2	24.2	8.6	2129
4.	My math course placement is appropriate for my skills.	23.0	35.2	16.1	15.5	10.3	1998
5.	Faculty are usually available after class and at office hours.	22.6	50.5	22.7	3.6	0.6	2056
6.	I've stayed motivated.	14.2	43.6	24.6	14.1	3.4	2134
7.	I've asked others for help.	20.3	54.4	16.0	7.7	1.6	2117
8.	I've selected a field of study/major.	38.0	26.4	11.1	14.4	10.1	2095
9.	I am usually on time for class.	42.3	42.2	9.2	5.1	1.3	2123
10.	Faculty care about me as an individual.	6.3	28.3	43.4	15.9	6.1	2113
11.	Getting a broad and well-rounded education is important to me.	58.2	30.4	7.9	2.5	1.1	2120
12.	My math course is organized and taught in a way that allows me to learn well.	19.2	30.9	19.4	18.2	12.2	1865
13.	I am familiar with the procedures for course registration.	13.5	40.1	23.9	18.9	3.7	2127
14.	I've identified a career direction or interest.	31.5	36.1	16.4	11.4	4.7	2110
15.	I've been able to maintain physical health and well-being.	25.1	46.3	17.0	8.8	2.8	2121
16.	Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in courses.	6.3	33.2	36.1	19.9	4.6	2108
17.	I know how to contact an advisor in my college/department.	22.1	43.7	13.2	15.7	5.3	2127
18.	I understand the purpose of the CORE (general education) program.	23.5	49.3	14.6	9.0	3.7	2131

Please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following (continued). (Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree)		UM Respondents					
		SA	A	U	D	SD	N
19.	I felt prepared to begin fall term after attending summer orientation.	16.5	46.0	23.3	10.2	4.0	2072
20.	I feel adequately prepared for academic demands here.	19.0	50.3	20.7	8.4	1.7	2116
21.	Overall, my courses are stimulating and exciting.	7.9	37.6	34.6	15.9	4.0	2133
22.	I am concerned about my ability to finance my college education.	24.7	21.4	19.5	21.3	13.2	2060
23.	I'm meeting people different from myself at Maryland.	42.5	47.0	7.9	1.8	0.8	2119
24.	My family encourages me to continue my college education.	76.8	19.7	2.7	0.3	0.5	2104
25.	There are sufficient campus activities on weekends to meet my interests and needs.	24.2	37.8	22.0	10.5	5.5	2012
26.	I'll be able to afford to enroll next semester.	42.2	43.5	9.9	3.1	1.3	2075
27.	My English 101 course is organized and taught in a way that allows me to learn well.	25.0	42.1	19.3	8.1	5.5	1514
28.	I can develop a class schedule that fits my needs.	16.8	54.9	20.8	6.1	1.5	2124
29.	I know where to get help on campus with reading and study skills.	14.0	44.2	22.8	15.1	3.9	2086
30.	I'm adjusting to the social life of college.	32.3	49.4	13.1	3.5	1.7	2113
31.	I'm as involved in campus activities as I want to be.	13.7	32.1	22.8	25.4	6.0	2113
32.	I'm adjusting to the academic work of college.	14.0	55.6	19.6	9.0	1.8	2127
33.	If I run into problems here, I know someone who'll listen to and help me.	21.2	47.2	18.9	10.1	2.7	2131
34.	I feel safe on campus.	16.7	51.4	23.6	6.4	1.9	2125
35.	There are social/leisure activities on campus that I like.	21.7	53.8	19.3	3.9	1.3	2102
36.	I read the Diamondback regularly.	23.0	36.9	15.1	15.9	9.1	2118

Please indicate how important the following college goals/outcomes are to you.		UM Respondents					N
		Very Important	Important	Undecided	Not Too Important	Not At All Important	
37.	Learning to communicate effectively in writing	51.2	39.8	4.9	3.4	0.7	2117
38.	Learning to communicate effectively orally	61.6	31.9	3.6	2.3	0.6	2116
39.	Acquiring technology skills for work and life	49.1	39.1	7.2	3.8	0.8	2111
40.	Learning to think and reason	65.3	30.5	2.6	1.1	0.4	2112
41.	Acquiring knowledge and skills in my academic interest area	78.0	19.1	1.8	0.8	0.4	2109
42.	Acquiring knowledge in areas that complement / enhance my academic interest area	58.4	36.2	4.2	1.0	0.2	2114
43.	Gaining appreciation of attitudes/cultures different than mine	34.5	44.9	12.7	6.5	1.4	2108
44.	Developing leadership skills	46.6	38.0	10.7	3.7	0.9	2111
45.	Participating in community service	22.4	38.1	23.0	12.6	3.9	2068

At present, how do you think you compare with other freshmen at UM in the following areas?		UM Respondents				
		Highest 10%	Above Average	Average	Below Average	N
46.	Oral communication skills	15.7	39.3	39.4	5.7	2135
47.	Math skills	14.1	38.7	36.6	10.5	2135
48.	Note taking	8.2	33.8	50.7	7.2	2134
49.	Listening	14.4	41.9	40.3	3.4	2133
50.	Managing time	9.9	25.3	45.7	19.1	2131
51.	Understanding what you read	12.5	35.7	45.0	6.9	2136
52.	Reading speed	9.6	25.6	46.1	18.7	2134
53.	Writing-organization	11.7	36.3	42.6	9.4	2136
54.	Writing-grammar	13.1	32.6	42.4	11.9	2134
55.	Managing stress	18.0	31.4	39.6	11.0	2133
56.	Memory	16.1	36.8	40.5	6.5	2139
57.	Finding library resources	5.3	22.9	53.1	18.7	2132
58.	Preparing for exams	5.4	27.0	56.3	11.4	2132
59.	Taking exams	8.2	31.6	49.7	10.5	2131
60.	Clarity of career goals	23.1	28.0	33.0	15.9	2130
61.	Word-processing on a computer	27.3	37.9	30.5	4.4	2131
62.	Browsing Internet for specific information (research)	25.0	34.5	31.1	9.4	2128
63.	Creating Web pages	8.0	9.7	18.0	64.3	2128
64.	Interacting with others via e-mail	33.3	34.0	26.6	6.1	2131

At present, how often do you do the following?		UM Respondents					
		Always	Most of the Time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N
65.	Review/revise/update class notes	7.3	18.0	41.0	25.1	8.6	2117
66.	Prepare for class by reading ahead	5.4	20.8	39.3	26.2	8.3	2118
67.	Put off studying	8.8	23.0	48.1	16.9	3.2	2115
68.	Have trouble deciding what to study	3.7	12.7	43.7	30.6	9.3	2109
69.	Speak up in class	10.2	22.6	39.4	22.4	5.3	2113
70.	Study with other students	4.1	15.3	40.5	28.4	11.7	2114
71.	Attend classes	58.3	36.0	4.5	0.9	0.2	2118

During your 1 st semester, what grade/average do you think you will earn?		UM Respondents				
		Grade of A	Grade of B	Grade of C	Grade Below C	N
72.	English	17.9	54.6	25.1	2.4	1617
73.	Math	40.8	40.4	15.8	3.1	1814
74.	Overall	21.9	63.0	13.8	1.3	2061

Have you used the following?		UM Respondents		
		Yes	No	N
75.	Testudo	85.6	14.4	2103
76.	MARS	71.1	28.9	2084
77.	VICTOR	62.4	37.6	2076
78.	Venus	37.0	63.0	2060

Please indicate how many hours per week you typically do each of the following.		UM Respondents					
		0 (no) hours	1-10 hours	11-20 hours	21-30 hours	More than 30 hours	N
79.	Work at an off-campus job	84.4	7.6	5.5	2.1	0.4	2117
80.	Work at an on-campus job	91.0	6.1	2.7	0.0	0.1	2121
81.	Study outside the classroom	1.2	45.2	36.0	13.8	3.8	2121
82.	Participate in organized student activities	31.8	58.6	6.5	1.9	1.2	2122

83. In the near future, you plan to work:		UM Respondents
		N = 2090
about the same number of hours as you're working now.		17.6
more hours after adjusting to college-level work.		55.6
fewer hours after adjusting to college-level work.		4.7
do not plan to work.		22.1

Please indicate the degree to which each describes a reason you plan to work while in college:		UM Respondents			
		Major Reason	Minor Reason	Not A Reason	N
84.	Help pay for my college education (tuition, books, etc.)	35.2	27.3	37.4	1992
85.	Take care of personal or family obligations	18.9	26.0	55.1	1978
86.	Earn extra spending money (clothes, snacks, gas, etc.)	61.4	26.0	12.6	1993
87.	Gain general job experience	37.3	37.4	25.3	1975
88.	Gain job experience related to my anticipated major	47.7	23.8	28.5	1986
89.	Career exploration	31.1	30.9	38.0	1980
90.	Career networking	29.7	31.6	38.8	1976

91.	My plan for enrollment next semester is to:	UM Respondents
		N = 2095
	remain enrolled full time at the University of Maryland.	98.2
	remain enrolled part time at the University of Maryland.	0.1
	enroll elsewhere (transfer).	1.5
	not enroll in higher education.	0.1

92.	I plan to complete my bachelor's degree at:	UM Respondents
		N = 2093
	the University of Maryland.	85.6
	another school at which I'll feel more comfortable and be happier.	2.8
	another school that offers a degree not offered at the University of Maryland.	1.1
	another school that has a more "prestigious" academic reputation than UM.	1.2
	don't know/not sure where.	9.3

93.	I expect to receive my bachelor's degree:	UM Respondents
		N = 2120
	in fewer than 4 years.	5.1
	in 4 years.	78.2
	in 5 years.	15.8
	in more than 5 years.	0.6
	may not finish.	0.3

94. When you entered this institution, it was your:	UM Respondents
	N = 2120
1 st choice.	61.6
2 nd choice.	24.7
3 rd choice or lower.	13.7

95. At present, your general attitude toward University of Maryland is:	UM Respondents
	N = 2128
very positive.	34.5
positive.	47.7
neutral.	14.5
negative.	2.7
very negative.	0.7

96. All in all, if you had it to do over again, you would enroll here:	UM Respondents
	N = 2123
definitely yes.	52.1
maybe / probably yes.	33.5
don't know.	8.0
maybe / probably not.	5.1
definitely not.	1.4

97. You currently live:	UM Respondents
	N = 2033
off-campus (commuting).	15.4
in Resident Life (contracted) housing.	84.6

Off Campus/Commuters

98. Which type of off-campus living situation best describes yours?	UM Respondents
	N = 383
Alone	2.6
Parents/guardians	76.8
Roommates or housemates	19.6
Spouse/partner and/or children	1.0

99. About how many minutes is your typical commute? (minutes per one-way trip)	UM Respondents	
	N = 369	
1-15 minutes	29.0	
16-30 minutes	34.1	
31-45 minutes	22.2	
46-60 minutes	10.0	
More than one hour	4.6	

Residence Hall Students

100. Which type of residence hall living situation best describes yours?	UM Respondents	
	N = 1749	
Traditional-coeducational	57.2	
Traditional-single sex	15.9	
Apartment or suite	5.4	
Permanent triple housing	3.0	
Motel/hotel	4.1	
Specialty housing	14.4	

101. Which type of specialty housing best describes yours?	UM Respondents	
	N = 1378	
Honors	20.0	
College Park Scholars	24.8	
Smoke/alcohol free	18.4	
International House	2.5	
St. Mary's Language House	0.0	
None	34.2	

Commuters & Residents

102. To what degree are you satisfied with your current living situation?	Residents	Commuters
	N = 1801	N = 324
Very satisfied	31.5	22.8
Satisfied	41.5	39.2
Neutral	11.6	16.4
Somewhat dissatisfied	10.6	15.1
Very dissatisfied	4.8	6.5