

Report of the Results of the BGSU First Year Student Questionnaire, 2001

ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of the Summer 2001 administration of the BGSU First Year Student Questionnaire (BFYSQ) to new main campus first year students. The BFYSQ is designed to collect enrollment management-related data, demographic data not otherwise collected as a result of BGSU's admission and registration processes, and data on students values and expectations. Its use supports both assessment and enrollment management activities. Results are used in this report to provide a descriptive profile of the freshman class (serving as a companion report to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions Freshman Class Profile). BFYSQ data are also maintained in databases within the Office of Institutional Research and are studied as predictors of outcomes such as retention, GPA's and graduation rates. This report includes a summary and conclusions as well as detailed tabular responses.

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

The need for assessment and enrollment management-related information about Bowling Green State University's first year students prompted the development of the BGSU First Year Student Questionnaire (BFYSQ) in 1997. The literature on college student learning, development, and persistence clearly shows that students pre-college characteristics, aspirations, expectations, and values play a crucial role in outcomes such as retention, grades, graduation, and educational and personal gains. Since no single commercially-available questionnaire would provide the data specifically needed by BGSU in a timely and cost effective manner, the BFYSQ was developed by the Office of Institutional Research. The results of the BFYSQ are comparable to those of the ACE/UCLA "Freshman Survey" administered at BGSU between 1973 and 1979 and between 1990 and 1995, and the "BGSU Freshman Survey" administered between 1980 and 1989. The Office of Institutional Research plans to administer the BFYSQ to new freshmen each summer before they matriculate.

The BFYSQ was distributed to all new first year students registered for BGSU's Orientation and Registration Program. A total of 2,972 questionnaires were returned. This represents a 83% response rate from among the 3,575 new freshmen who participated in summer 2001 Orientation and Registration Program. BFYSQ results were analyzed by noting the percentages of participants who provided various responses to each questionnaire item. Percentages may not always sum to 100 due to rounding. Results were also compared with those of previous similar questionnaires. The following pages highlight these findings.

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT-RELATED INFORMATION

How many other colleges besides BGSU did you apply to?

	1991	2000	2001
None	28%	29%	29%
1	20%	25%	24%
2	23%	25%	25%
Three or More	29%	21%	22%

How many other colleges besides BGSU admitted you this year?

	1991	2000	2001
None	NA	34%	35%

One	NA	29%	29%
Two	NA	22%	21%
Three or More	NA	16%	15%

Among colleges to attend, was BGSU your . . .

	1991	2000	2001
First Choice	81%	84%	82%
Second Choice	16%	15%	16%
Less Than Second Choice	3%	2%	2%

How important were each of the following in your decision to attend college in general? (Percent "Very Important")

	1991	2000	2001
To Prepare for a Professional Career	NA	88%	88%
To Get a Better Job	82%	73%	71%
To Be Able to Make More Money	72%	63%	63%
To Learn More about Things That Interest me	68%	62%	61%
To Gain a General Education	55%	51%	51%
To Make Me a More Cultured Person	34%	29%	29%
To Improve My Reading and Study Skills	29%	28%	26%
My Parents Wanted Me to Go	30%	24%	25%
To Learn More About Other People	NA	25%	24%
I Wanted to Get Away from Home	21%	21%	22%
A Mentor/Role Model Encouraged Me to Go	NA	11%	10%

How important were each of the following in your decision to attend BGSU? (Percent "Very Important")

	1991	2000	2001
BGSU graduates get good jobs	NA	50%	50%
My BGSU visit was pleasant and friendly	NA	42%	41%
BGSU offers unique educational programs	NA	40%	38%
BGSU's academic reputation	NA	39%	38%

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

How many miles from BGSU is your permanent home?

	1991	2000	2001
10 miles or Less	2%	4%	5%
11 to 50 miles	19%	23%	24%
51 to 100 miles	19%	18%	18%
101 to 500 miles	58%	53%	52%
Over 500 miles	2%	3%	2%

What is your best estimate of your parents' income?

	1991	2000	2001
Less than \$30,000	18%	8%	8%
\$30,000-\$49,999	33%	18%	19%
\$50,000-\$74,999	31%	33%	30%
\$75,000-\$99,999	10%	21%	21%
\$100,000 or More	8%	20%	22%

Compared with 1991, the percentage of students whose estimated parental income was \$75,000 or more doubled from 18% in 1991 to 43% in 2001. The percentage of students whose estimated parental income was \$49,000 or below decreased from 51% in 1991 to 27% in 2001.

How much of your first year's educational expenses do you expect to cover from each of the sources listed below? (Percent \$1,500 and Over)

	1991	2000	2001
Parents	69%	73%	74%
Other College Loan	3%	29%	33%
Ford Direct Subsidized Loan	NA	27%	28%
Other College Grant/Scholarship	5%	26%	26%
Savings From Summer Work	12%	23%	22%
Other Loan	3%	15%	18%
Other Savings	9%	17%	17%
College Work Study	2%	11%	13%
Pell Grant	3%	10%	11%
Other Source	1%	7%	8%
Part-Time Job On Campus	2%	6%	7%
Perkins Loan	1%	9%	6%
Part-Time Job Off Campus	1%	4%	4%
Ohio Instructional Grant	NA	3%	3%
Other Private Grant	NA	3%	2%

How concerned are you about your ability to finance your college education?

	1991	2000	2001
Not at All	NA	29%	30%
Somewhat	NA	56%	54%
Very	NA	15%	16%

How many hours per week during the school year do you plan to be employed?

	1991	2000	2001
None	NA	29%	28%
1 to 9	NA	20%	21%
10 to 19	NA	40%	39%
20 to 39	NA	11%	12%
40 or More	NA	0%	0%

The vast majority (99%) of respondents indicated that English is their native language and 74% of them reported that both of their parents are alive and living together.

For each of the following items, please indicate your level of involvement while in 9th-12th grade (Percent "Highly Involved"):

	1991	2000	2001
Athletics	NA	64%	66%
Part-time job	NA	54%	55%
Community service	NA	30%	30%
Band or orchestra	NA	27%	28%
Religious organization	NA	26%	27%
Choir or vocal ensemble	NA	22%	22%
Theatre	NA	22%	21%
Academic honor society	NA	18%	18%
Student council	NA	17%	18%
Yearbook	NA	16%	17%
Class officer	NA	15%	14%
Newspaper	NA	12%	11%
Debate	NA	4%	4%
ROTC	NA	1%	2%

What is the highest level of formal education obtained by your parents?

	Father	Mother
High school graduate	30%	32%
Some college	17%	17%
College degree	29%	29%
Graduate degree	15%	13%

	1991	2000	2001
Mother and father high school or less:	NA	19%	18%
At least one parent a college graduate:	NA	59%	59%
Both parents college graduates:	NA	29%	29%

Your Father's Occupation (10% or More Than 10% of Respondents):

	1991	2000	2001
Business	30%	33%	23%
Other	25%	18%	20%
Semi-skilled worker	5%	3%	11%

Your Mother's Occupation(10% or More Than 10% of Respondents):

	1991	2000	2001
Other	24%	20%	22%
Business	22%	25%	13%
Actor, Artist, or Musician	1%	0%	11%

Your Probable Occupation (10% or More Than 10% of Respondents):

1991 2000 2001

Undecided	11%	19%	18%
Business	15%	15%	17%
Other	10%	11%	13%
Therapist	6%	2%	11%
Teacher or administrator	20%	23%	10%

2001 students were more likely to report that they would become therapists and less likely to report that they would become teachers or administrators than were earlier groups of first year students.

What is the highest degree you plan to obtain anywhere?

	1991	2000	2001
Bachelor's	34%	13%	14%
Master's	44%	62%	64%
Doctorate	12%	12%	10%
Professional	7%	12%	12%

What is the highest degree you plan to obtain at BGSU?

	1991	2000	2001
Bachelor's	72%	75%	78%
Master's	20%	22%	19%
Doctorate	3%	2%	1%

Although increased number of students would like to obtain a Master's degree anywhere between early 1990's and early 2000's, their most frequent academic goal at BGSU is a Bachelor's degree.

Do you feel that you will need any special tutoring or remedial work in any of the following subjects?

	1991	2000	2001
English	10%	6%	6%
Reading	5%	2%	2%
Mathematics	27%	21%	24%
Social Studies	2%	1%	2%
Science	12%	6%	7%
Foreign Language	10%	7%	8%

Like the years before, mathematics is the only subject where a sizeable percentage of freshmen are concerned about their academic preparation for college work.

EXPECTATIONS AND VALUES INFORMATION

What is your estimate of the chance that you will . . . (Percent "Very Good")

	1991	2000	2001
get a Bachelor's Degree	79%	77%	78%
find a job in my major after graduation	72%	71%	72%
be satisfied with BGSU	52%	60%	60%
get a job to help pay for college	48%	51%	54%

make at least a B average 44% 48% 46%

What is your estimate of the chance that you will . . . (Percent "None")

	1991	2000	2001
drop out of college permanently	NA	89%	91%
drop out of college temporarily	NA	78%	79%
get married while in college	NA	52%	54%
fail one or more courses	NA	47%	46%
work full-time while attending	NA	40%	39%
transfer to another college before graduation	NA	39%	38%

How important are each of the following to you? (Percent "Essential" or "Very Important")

	1991	2000	2001
being very well off financially	71%	83%	84%
raising a family	72%	78%	78%
helping others in difficulty	60%	69%	69%
becoming an authority in my field	69%	64%	64%
obtaining recognition from my colleagues for my contributions	55%	53%	56%
influencing social values	41%	48%	49%
Becoming successful in a business of my own	35%	48%	48%

How important are each of the following to you? (Percent "Not Important")

	1991	2000	2001
writing original works (poems, novels, etc.)	NA	54%	56%
becoming accomplished in the arts	NA	56%	55%
creating artistic works	NA	54%	52%
making a contribution to science	NA	45%	46%
influencing the political structure	NA	36%	36%

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This report continues a nearly thirty year history of "freshman survey" results at BGSU. It serves as one component of a comprehensive program of assessment and enrollment management research activities carried out by the Office of Institutional Research.

The results of 2001 study are similar to those of prior "freshman survey" administrations. BGSU students continue to be pragmatic and vocationally oriented. Freshmen apply and are admitted to few other institutions. BGSU is their overwhelming first choice. Their reasons for attending college are primarily vocational and educational. The perceived career success of our graduates coupled with unique educational programs, academic reputation, and a pleasant and friendly campus visit are the principal reasons that students choose BGSU.

2001 Freshmen are mostly from in-state and middle class family. Parents are still the greatest source of financial support for college, but increased number of students have expected to get their financial support

from loans, grants/scholarships, savings, and college work study between 1991 and now. Most of the respondents participated in athletics and had a part-time job during their high school years. More than 70% of them still wanted to be employed during their college year. Their most frequent academic goal at BGSU is a Bachelor's Degree in "undecided" or business. Mathematics is the sole area where a sizeable percentage of freshmen (24%) are concerned about their academic preparation for college work.

The respondents seemed to be highly confident in their abilities. Most of them are very positive about their chances of earning a Bachelor's Degree, finding a job in their field after graduation, and being satisfied with BGSU. The majority of them predict that they will not drop out college temporarily or permanently. Being very well off financially and raising a family are among their most important goals.

The Office of Institutional Research welcomes feedback concerning this and other studies and how they can continue to be improved.