

Report of the Results of the BGSU First Year Student Questionnaire, 2005

ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of the Summer 2005 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.

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

This report continues a more than thirty year history of "freshman survey" results at BGSU. 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 in 1997. 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 year before they matriculate.

The 2005 BFYSQ was distributed to all new first year students who registered for BGSU's Orientation and Registration Program during the months of June and July. A total of 2,368 questionnaires were returned, which represented 66% of the 2005 main campus new first year freshman class. This rate is higher than the response rate of 2004 (64%) and 2003 (33%, online survey).

To examine how representative the survey respondents were of the entire first year first time freshman class, the demographic characteristics of the 1906 survey respondents who provided valid social security numbers were compared to all entering 2005 first year first time freshmen. There is a high degree of gender, race, college, and residential status similarity between the respondents and the population.

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?

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
None	33%	27%	29%
1	23%	25%	24%
2	21%	25%	24%
Three or More	23%	23%	23%

How many other colleges besides BGSU admitted you this year?

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
None	NA	31%	32%
One	NA	29%	28%
Two	NA	22%	21%
Three or More	NA	18%	19%

Among colleges to attend, was BGSU your . . .

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
First Choice	81%	84%	84%
Second Choice	16%	14%	14%
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")

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
To Prepare for a Professional Career	NA	89%	89%
To Be Able to Get a Better Job	83%	73%	70%
To Learn More about Things That Interest me	77%	65%	64%
To Be Able to Make More Money	74%	64%	63%
To Gain a General Education and Appreciation of Ideas	60%	53%	53%
To Make Me a More Cultured Person	38%	34%	32%
My Parents Wanted Me to Go	27%	30%	30%
To Improve My Reading and Study Skills	35%	29%	29%
To Learn More About Other People	NA	27%	27%
I Wanted to Get Away from Home	19%	24%	24%
A Mentor/Role Model Encouraged Me to Go	11%	12%	13%

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

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
BGSU graduates get good jobs	43%	54%	51%
My BGSU visit was pleasant and friendly	NA	50%	48%
BGSU offers unique educational programs	NA	44%	41%
BGSU's academic reputation	52%	41%	39%
BGSU's graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional schools	18%	41%	39%
BGSU is in a small and safe community	NA	38%	37%
I wanted to attend a school of BGSU's size	39%	35%	37%
the reputation of BGSU's faculty, staff, and students	NA	33%	31%
BGSU takes student safety seriously	NA	31%	31%
BGSU has an attractive campus	NA	31%	31%
BGSU's social reputation	27%	29%	29%
cost of tuition at BGSU	30%	23%	24%

"BGSU graduates get good jobs", "my BGSU visit was pleasant and friendly", and "BGSU offers unique education programs" were more likely to be the important reasons for 2005 and 2004 freshmen to attend BGSU. Compared with the freshmen in 1995, 2005 freshmen were more likely to consider "BGSU graduates get good jobs" and "BGSU's graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional school " as the important factors for them to choose BGSU, but less likely to consider BGSU's academic reputation and the cost of tuition as the important reasons to attend this school.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

How many miles from BGSU is your permanent home?

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
10 miles or Less	3%	4%	4%
11 to 50 miles	23%	23%	24%
51 to 100 miles	19%	19%	19%
101 to 500 miles	53%	51%	51%
Over 500 miles	2%	3%	3%

What is your best estimate of your parents' income?

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Less than \$30,000	14%	10%	10%
\$30,000-\$49,999	24%	17%	17%
\$50,000-\$74,999	34%	29%	26%
\$75,000-\$99,999	16%	20%	23%
\$100,000 or More	12%	25%	24%

The percentage of students whose estimated parental income was \$75,000 or more increased from 28% in 1995 to 47% in 2005.

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)

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Parents, relatives, friends	69%	69%	69%
Other College Grant/Scholarship	8%	41%	47%
Other College Loan	12%	39%	42%
Other Loan	7%	22%	25%
Ford Direct Subsidized Loan	NA	23%	24%
Savings From Summer Work	16%	21%	17%
Other Savings	9%	18%	17%
Pell Grant	3%	13%	16%
College Work Study	3%	17%	15%
Perkins Loan	5%	10%	12%
Other Source	3%	9%	9%
Part-Time Job On Campus	4%	10%	8%
Ohio Instructional Grant	NA	6%	7%
Other Private Grant	2%	5%	6%
Part-Time Job Off Campus	2%	4%	5%

Families were still the major source of finance for the majority of BGSU freshmen. Compared with the freshmen ten years ago, however, this year's freshmen were more likely to depend on multiple sources of support for their college education.

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

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Not at All	27%	27%	29%
Somewhat	56%	56%	55%
Very	18%	17%	16%

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

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
None	NA	25%	26%
1 to 9	NA	16%	17%
10 to 19	NA	43%	42%
20 to 39	NA	15%	15%
40 or More	NA	1%	1%

For each of the following items, please indicate the number of years you participated while in 9th-12th grade (Percent "Two Years or More"):

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Athletics	NA	91%	91%
Religious organization	NA	90%	90%
Community service	NA	83%	85%
Part-time job	NA	84%	82%
Band or orchestra	NA	82%	81%
Academic honor society	NA	76%	81%
ROTC	NA	74%	75%
Choir or vocal ensemble	NA	69%	72%
Theatre	NA	69%	70%
Student council	NA	62%	64%
Class officer	NA	61%	56%
Debate	NA	54%	54%
Yearbook	NA	43%	43%
Newspaper	NA	42%	37%

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

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Athletics	NA	64%	62%
Part-time job	NA	53%	52%
Community service	NA	32%	33%
Band or orchestra	NA	24%	25%
Religious organization	NA	23%	22%

Academic honor society	NA	18%	20%
Choir or vocal ensemble	NA	18%	20%
Theatre	NA	20%	18%
Student council	NA	13%	15%
Yearbook	NA	15%	13%
Class officer	NA	13%	12%
Newspaper	NA	8%	9%
Debate	NA	3%	4%
ROTC	NA	1%	2%

Fifty percent or more of the 2005 freshmen spent two or more years participating in most of the activities listed on the survey during their high school years, and they seemed more likely to be highly involved with athletics and part-time jobs than other activities listed on the survey.

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

	<u>1995</u>		<u>2004</u>		<u>2005</u>	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Some high school or less	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
High school graduate	28%	35%	29%	30%	30%	29%
Post secondary school other than college	5%	7%	3%	3%	3%	4%
Some college	17%	19%	17%	19%	18%	19%
College degree	28%	23%	31%	32%	28%	31%
Some graduate school	3%	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%
Graduate degree	15%	9%	15%	11%	15%	13%

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Mother and father high school or less:	NA	16%	17%
At least one parent a college graduate:	NA	63%	63%
Both parents college graduates:	NA	30%	30%

Your Father's Occupation (top four):

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Business	34%	28%	27%
Other	20%	21%	21%
Semi-skilled worker	6%	12%	12%
Computer programmer or analyst	NA	8%	8%

Your Mother's Occupation (top four):

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Other	21%	25%	25%
Business	28%	13%	15%
Lawyer/attorney/judge	0%	10%	10%
Therapist	NA	8%	8%

Your Probable Occupation (top four):

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Undecided	17%	17%	18%
Business	12%	14%	15%
Other	9%	13%	14%
Teacher or administrator	17%	12%	12%

What is the highest degree you plan to obtain anywhere?

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Bachelor's	37%	11%	9%
Master's	44%	64%	65%
Doctorate	10%	12%	11%
Professional	7%	12%	13%
Other	2%	1%	1%

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

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Bachelor's	74%	78%	78%
Master's	22%	20%	19%
Doctorate	2%	1%	2%
Other	2%	1%	1%

The most frequent academic goals of entering freshmen are a Bachelor's degree at BGSU and a Master's anywhere.

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

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Mathematics	12%	28%	27%
English	4%	7%	8%
Foreign Language	4%	7%	7%
Science	4%	7%	7%
Reading	4%	2%	2%
Social Studies	3%	2%	2%

Mathematics remains the subject where a sizeable percentage of freshmen may need tutoring or remedial work. 2005 entering freshmen were also more concerned about their mathematics preparation than were the freshmen ten years ago.

EXPECTATIONS AND VALUES INFORMATION

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

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
get a Bachelor's Degree	82%	83%	82%
find a job in my major after graduation	77%	71%	70%
be satisfied with BGSU	60%	65%	66%
get a job to help pay for college expenses	57%	55%	53%

make at least a "B" average	54%	51%	52%
participate in volunteer or community service work	18%	19%	21%
join a social club, fraternity, or sorority	17%	20%	19%
graduate with honors	13%	14%	16%
change your major	15%	15%	15%
play varsity intercollegiate athletics	11%	13%	13%
change your career choice	14%	12%	12%
join a student professional/government organization	NA	7%	8%
be elected to an academic honor society	8%	6%	6%
participate in student protests/demonstrations	4%	6%	5%
need extra time to complete your degree	6%	4%	4%
work full time while attending college	3%	4%	4%
transfer to another college before graduation	4%	3%	3%
get married while in college	3%	1%	2%
be elected to a student office	2%	1%	2%
fail one or more courses	0%	1%	1%
drop out of college permanently	0%	0%	0%
drop out of college temporarily	0%	0%	0%

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

	<u>1995</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
being very well off financially	74%	81%	82%
raising a family	77%	80%	82%
helping others who are in difficulty	64%	71%	74%
becoming an authority in my field	66%	62%	63%
obtaining recognition from my colleagues for my contributions	54%	55%	56%
influencing social values	40%	50%	50%
developing a meaningful philosophy of life	43%	48%	49%
becoming successful in a business of my own	33%	44%	47%
having administrative responsibility for the work of others	40%	42%	37%
helping to promote racial understanding	31%	37%	37%
keeping up to date with political affairs	28%	36%	36%
becoming a community leader	28%	30%	33%
participating in a community action program	20%	28%	28%
becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment	19%	25%	26%
creating artistic works	12%	21%	22%
influencing the political structure	12%	21%	21%
becoming accomplished in the performing arts	10%	20%	21%
writing original works (poems, novels, etc.)	11%	18%	20%
making a contribution to science	10%	17%	19%

Being very well off financially, raising a family, helping others who are in difficulty, becoming an authority in their fields, and obtaining recognition from their colleagues for their contributions continued to be the important life goals for most of BGSU freshmen.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Responses to the 2005 BGSU First Year Student Questionnaire (BFYSQ) were generally similar to those of

previous BFYSQs.

2005 Freshmen are mostly from in-state and from middle class families. Parents/relatives/friends were the greatest source of financial support for college. Compared with the freshmen ten years ago, a greater portion of 2005 freshmen expected to get support from loans, grants/scholarships, and savings. More than 70% of them have some concerns about their ability to finance their college education.

Like the freshmen in previous years, 2005 freshmen apply and are admitted to few other institutions. BGSU is their overwhelming first choice. They are very pragmatic about their general reasons for going to college --- the most common reason cited was to prepare for a professional career, followed by to get a better job, to learn more about things that interest them, and to be able to make more money. The perceived career success of our graduates coupled with a pleasant campus visit are the principal reasons that incoming freshmen choose BGSU. Compared with the freshmen in 1995, however, 2005 entering freshmen were less likely to consider BGSU's academic reputation and cost of tuition as the important reasons to attend, but more likely to consider "BGSU graduates get good jobs" and "BGSU's graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional schools" as the important factors for them to choose BGSU.

More than half of the 2005 entering freshman indicated that they were highly involved with athletics and part-time jobs during their high school years and the majority of them still wanted to be employed during their college years. Their most frequent academic goal at BGSU is a Bachelor's Degree in "undecided" or "business." Raising a family, being very well off financially, helping others who are in difficulty, and becoming an authority in their field of study are among their most important life goals.

The 2005 freshman seemed to be very positive about their chances of making at least a "B" average for their courses, earning a Bachelor's Degree, finding a job in their field after graduation, get a job to help pay for their college expenses, and being satisfied with BGSU. The majority of them predict that chances are none or very little for them to fail one or more courses, take extra time to complete their degree, and drop out college temporarily or permanently. Mathematics, however, remains the area where a sizeable percentage of freshmen are concerned about their academic preparation for college work.

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