

**REPORT OF THE RESULTS OF THE BGSU  
FIRST-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE, 2010**

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**ABSTRACT**

This report describes the results of the Summer/Fall 2010 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. The results of the survey 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 maintained in databases within the Office of Institutional Research and are studied as predictors of outcomes such as retention, GPAs, and graduation rates.

**BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY**

BGSU has conducted a "freshman survey" for more than thirty years. 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 BGSU First Year Student Questionnaire (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 BFYSQ has been distributed to all new first-year freshmen who registered for BGSU's Orientation and Registration Program in June and July since 1997. This year's survey, however, was administered to the incoming freshmen during the Opening Weekend activities on August 21 and 22. A total of 1,039 questionnaires were returned, which represented about 27% (1039/3841) of the 2010 main campus new first-year freshman. This rate is significantly lower than the ones in 2009 (55%) and in 2008 (75%).

To examine how representative the survey respondents were of the entire first-year, first-time freshman class, the demographic characteristics of the 840 survey respondents who provided

valid BGSU ID numbers were compared to all entering Fall 2010 first-time first-year freshmen (the population file was provided by Admissions Office). As indicated by the numbers on the table below, survey respondents, in general, mirror the population in terms of race, college and residential status. The proportion of female respondents (64%), however, was higher than the one in the population (55%).

	<b>Survey Respondents</b>	<b>2010 First Time First Year Freshman</b>
<b>Gender:</b>		
Female	64%	55%
Male	36%	45%
<b>Race:</b>		
Minorities	17%	21%
European-American	78%	74%
Other/Unknown	5%	5%
<b>College:</b>		
Arts and Sciences	30%	29%
Business Administration	10%	11%
Education and Human Development	25%	22%
Health and Human Services	10%	12%
Musical Arts	4%	3%
Technology	6%	5%
Academic Enhancement	16%	19%
<b>Residential Status:</b>		
In State Students	86%	86%
Out of State Students	14%	14%
International Students	1%	1%

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. This report highlights these findings.

## ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT-RELATED INFORMATION

### How many other colleges besides BGSU did you apply for admission this year?

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
None	29%	27%	25%	23%
1	25%	25%	24%	20%
2	25%	23%	23%	24%
Three or More	21%	25%	28%	33%

### How many other colleges besides BGSU admitted you this year?

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
None	34%	32%	29%	28%
One	29%	29%	29%	24%
Two	22%	19%	21%	21%
Three or More	16%	20%	21%	27%

### Among colleges to attend, was BGSU your . . .

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
First Choice	84%	82%	82%	73%
Second Choice	15%	16%	16%	23%
Less Than Second Choice	2%	2%	2%	4%

Compared with the freshmen in 2000, 2008, and 2009, 2010 freshmen were more likely to apply three or more colleges besides BGSU and be admitted by three or more other schools as well. The percentage of freshmen who claimed that “BGSU was their first choice” decreased from 82% in 2008 and 2009 to 73% in 2010.

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

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
To Prepare for a Professional Career	88%	92%	91%	86%
To Be Able to Get a Better Job	73%	74%	73%	74%
To Learn More about Things That Interest me	62%	69%	71%	69%
To Be Able to Make More Money	63%	71%	68%	65%
To Gain a General Education and Appreciation of Ideas	51%	55%	56%	56%
My Parents Wanted Me to Go	24%	31%	35%	36%
To Make Me a More Cultured Person	29%	36%	34%	36%
To Improve My Reading and Study Skills	28%	30%	31%	31%
To Learn More About Other People	25%	25%	26%	29%
I Wanted to Get Away from Home	21%	25%	24%	29%
A Mentor/Role Model Encouraged Me to Go	11%	13%	14%	19%

Compared with the freshmen in 2000, 2008, and 2009, 2010 freshmen were more likely to cite “my parents wanted me to go”, “to learn more about other people”, “I wanted to get away from

home “, and “a mentor/role model encouraged me to go” as the very important factors for them to attend college in general.

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

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
My BGSU visit was pleasant and friendly	42%	55%	56%	59%
BGSU graduates get good jobs	50%	58%	60%	57%
BGSU’s academic reputation	39%	49%	48%	51%
BGSU offers unique educational programs	40%	49%	49%	48%
BGSU's graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional schools	38%	45%	47%	45%
BGSU is in a small and safe community	35%	44%	43%	45%
BGSU takes student safety seriously	28%	40%	38%	43%
I wanted to attend a school of BGSU's size	32%	41%	38%	42%
BGSU has an attractive campus	29%	38%	37%	42%
the reputation of BGSU's faculty, staff, and students	30%	35%	37%	41%
cost of tuition at BGSU	20%	31%	35%	38%
I was offered financial assistance	15%	30%	34%	36%
BGSU's social reputation	28%	34%	32%	34%
BGSU's rankings in national magazines	17%	21%	19%	30%
I wanted to live near home	13%	14%	15%	16%
A friend suggested attending	9%	10%	11%	12%
My relatives wanted me to come here	5%	8%	8%	11%
A teacher advised me	5%	7%	7%	9%

"My BGSU visit was pleasant and friendly" and "BGSU graduates get good jobs" remain the top two reasons for most incoming freshmen to choose BGSU. Compared with the freshmen in the last two years and ten years ago, 2010 freshmen were more likely to indicate that a pleasant campus visit, BGSU’s academic and faculty/staff/student reputation, an attractive and safe environment, the size of the University, the cost of tuition and financial assistance, and BGSU’s rankings in national magazines were very important reasons for them to attend BGSU.

**To what extent did each of the following college guides influence your decision to attend BGSU? (Select all that apply)**

	<u>2010</u>
ACT college guide publications an/or web site	21%
Barron's <i>Profiles of American College</i> (publication and/or web site)	1%
Peterson's college guide publications and/or web site	1%
The Princeton Review's college guide publications and/or web site	5%
U.S. News <i>America's Best Colleges</i> (publications and/or web site)	13%
Wintergreen Orchard House Colleges Atlas and Planner (publications and/or web site)	1%
Other	54%

The results of this question, which was used for the first time in 2010, revealed that only ACT college guide publications and the U.S. News *America's Best Colleges* publications influenced substantial percentages of first-year students to attend BGSU.

## DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

### How many miles from BGSU is your permanent home?

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
10 miles or Less	4%	4%	4%	4%
11 to 50 miles	23%	24%	26%	19%
51 to 100 miles	18%	21%	21%	21%
101 to 500 miles	53%	49%	47%	50%
Over 500 miles	3%	2%	3%	6%

### Is English your native language?

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Yes	99%	99%	99%	99%
No	1%	1%	1%	1%

### Are your parents

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
both alive and living with each other	74%	66%	68%	67%
both alive, divorced or living apart	23%	30%	29%	30%
one or both deceased	3%	4%	4%	4%

### What is your best estimate of your parents' income?

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Less than \$30,000	8%	12%	11%	14%
\$30,000-\$49,999	18%	15%	16%	20%
\$50,000-\$74,999	33%	26%	26%	31%
\$75,000-\$99,999	21%	20%	22%	17%
\$100,000 or More	20%	28%	26%	18%

Thirty four percent of the 2010 freshmen reported that their estimated family income is \$49,999 or less. This number is higher than the ones in 2008 and 2009, and the one in 2000.

**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>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Parents, relatives, friends	73%	62%	61%	60%
Other College Grant/Scholarship	26%	52%	64%	58%
Ford Direct Subsidized Loan	27%	30%	44%	38%
Other College Loan	29%	52%	45%	34%
Pell Grant	10%	21%	26%	24%
Other Loan	15%	25%	24%	21%
Savings From Summer Work	23%	20%	15%	15%
Other Savings	17%	20%	15%	14%
Perkins Loan	9%	8%	9%	9%
Other Private Grant	3%	6%	9%	9%
Other Source	7%	15%	12%	8%
College Work Study	11%	20%	12%	6%
Ohio Instructional Grant	3%	6%	9%	6%
Part-Time Job On Campus	6%	13%	10%	5%
Part-Time Job Off Campus	4%	6%	5%	4%

Parents/relatives/friends remain the greatest source of financial support for 2010 freshmen. Compared with the freshmen in 2000, however, 2010 freshmen were less likely to report that they will receive \$1500 and more from their family to cover their college expenses, but more likely to get help from loans/grants/scholarships.

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

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
None	29%	22%	23%	34%
1 to 9	20%	19%	18%	21%
10 to 19	40%	43%	44%	38%
20 to 39	11%	15%	15%	6%
40 or More	0%	1%	1%	0%

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

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Not at All	29%	22%	20%	23%
Somewhat	56%	61%	61%	55%
Very	15%	17%	19%	22%

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

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Athletics	64%	65%	63%	55%
Part-time job	54%	52%	53%	46%
Community service	30%	34%	33%	39%
Band or orchestra	27%	27%	27%	25%
Choir or vocal ensemble	22%	20%	21%	25%
Theatre	22%	20%	21%	24%
Religious organization	26%	23%	19%	23%
Academic honor society	18%	17%	16%	19%
Student council	17%	14%	12%	13%
Yearbook	16%	14%	12%	13%
Class officer	15%	14%	12%	12%
Newspaper	12%	9%	8%	9%
Debate	4%	4%	3%	6%
ROTC	1%	1%	1%	4%

BGSU freshmen were more likely to be involved with athletics and part-time jobs than other activities listed on the survey while they were in high school.

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

	<u>2000</u>		<u>2008</u>		<u>2009</u>		<u>2010</u>	
	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
Some high school or less	3%	2%	3%	2%	3%	2%	4%	3%
High school graduate	29%	31%	32%	27%	30%	25%	29%	23%
Post sec. sch. other than college	4%	5%	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	5%
Some college	19%	18%	18%	19%	16%	19%	15%	20%
College degree	29%	28%	29%	33%	31%	34%	29%	34%
Some graduate school	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%
Graduate degree	15%	12%	12%	12%	14%	13%	18%	14%

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Mother and father high school or less:	19%	16%	16%	16%
At least one parent a college graduate:	59%	63%	65%	65%
Both parents college graduates:	29%	27%	32%	33%

**Your Father's Occupation (top four in 2010):**

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Other	23%	22%	21%	30%
Business	30%	25%	26%	22%
Engineer	7%	1%	8%	11%
Unemployed	2%	4%	7%	8%

**Your Mother's Occupation (top four in 2010):**

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Other	20%	23%	24%	32%
Teacher or administrator	17%	5%	12%	12%
Business	25%	13%	23%	11%
Unemployed	5%	8%	9%	11%

**Your Probable Occupation (top four in 2010):**

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Teacher or administrator	18%	12%	20%	21%
Other	10%	14%	14%	17%
Undecided	11%	14%	16%	12%
Business	14%	13%	10%	10%

**What is the highest degree you plan to obtain anywhere?**

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Bachelor's	13%	11%	8%	10%
Master's	62%	64%	62%	63%
Doctorate	12%	12%	16%	17%
Professional	12%	11%	13%	10%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%

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

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Bachelor's	75%	78%	76%	77%
Master's	22%	18%	21%	20%
Doctorate	2%	2%	2%	2%
Professional	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	0%	1%	1%	1%

The most likely academic goal of entering freshmen is 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>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
Mathematics	21%	32%	36%	34%
Science	6%	10%	14%	15%
English	6%	8%	13%	16%
Foreign Language	7%	10%	10%	10%
Reading	2%	3%	6%	4%
Social Studies	1%	2%	4%	2%

Mathematics remains the subject in which sizeable numbers of freshmen feel that they may need tutoring or remedial work. Compared with the 2000 freshmen, incoming freshmen were also more likely to look for help in other subjects as well.

**EXPECTATIONS AND VALUES INFORMATION**

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

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
get a Bachelor's Degree	77%	85%	85%	79%
find a job in my major after graduation	71%	75%	74%	66%
be satisfied with BGSU	60%	69%	70%	63%
make at least a "B" average	48%	52%	55%	58%
get a job to help pay for college expenses	51%	59%	58%	47%
participate in volunteer or community service work	18%	23%	26%	35%
join a social club, fraternity, or sorority	21%	23%	24%	25%
graduate with honors	12%	13%	14%	18%
change your major	18%	14%	12%	14%
play varsity intercollegiate athletics	12%	13%	13%	13%
change your career choice	15%	13%	11%	12%
join a student professional/government organization	8%	8%	10%	12%
be elected to an academic honor society	6%	5%	6%	9%
participate in student protests/demonstrations	4%	7%	6%	9%
need extra time to complete your degree	5%	4%	4%	9%
work full time while attending college	3%	5%	4%	5%
transfer to another college before graduation	3%	4%	3%	5%
be elected to a student office	5%	3%	2%	4%
get married while in college	2%	2%	2%	4%
fail one or more courses	1%	0%	0%	1%
drop out of college permanently	0%	0%	0%	1%
drop out of college temporarily	1%	0%	0%	1%

Compared with the freshmen in the three previous years, 2010 freshmen were more likely to declare that they will participate in volunteer or community service work, make at least a “B” average, and graduate with honors, but less likely to say that they will get a job to help pay for college expenses and find a job in their major after graduation.

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

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>
being very well off financially	83%	85%	85%	81%
raising a family	79%	80%	78%	79%
helping others who are in difficulty	69%	73%	73%	75%
becoming an authority in my field	64%	66%	60%	58%
obtaining recognition from my colleagues for my contributions	53%	57%	56%	58%
developing a meaningful philosophy of life	45%	53%	50%	53%
influencing social values	49%	53%	51%	52%
becoming successful in a business of my own	47%	44%	42%	42%
having administrative responsibility for the work of others	42%	44%	42%	42%
helping to promote racial understanding	34%	35%	36%	41%
participating in a community action program	28%	35%	33%	41%
becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment	27%	34%	34%	40%
becoming a community leader	33%	35%	32%	36%
keeping up to date with political affairs	31%	39%	35%	33%
creating artistic works	21%	24%	22%	26%
becoming accomplished in the performing arts	21%	19%	22%	24%
writing original works (poems, novels, etc.)	17%	18%	19%	23%
influencing the political structure	19%	19%	20%	22%
making a contribution to science	18%	18%	19%	22%

Being very well off financially, raising a family, and helping others who are in difficulty continue to be the most important life goals for the majority of BGSU freshmen. Incoming freshmen were also more likely than the freshmen in 2000, 2008, and 2009 to participate in a community action program and environment cleanup activity.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Most of the 2010 freshmen applied and were admitted to two or fewer other institutions. BGSU was their overwhelming first choice. They are very pragmatic about their college education --- preparing for a professional career, getting a better job, being able to make more money, and learning more about things that interest them were very important reasons for most of incoming freshmen to attend college. A pleasant campus visit coupled with the perceived career success of our graduates and BGSU's academic reputation were the principal reasons that incoming freshmen chose BGSU.

The 2010 freshmen are mostly from in-state and from middle class families. Parents are still the greatest source of financial support for college, but the number of students who expected to get support from loans, grants, and scholarships have increased between 2000 and 2010. Seventy-seven percent of them expressed some level of concern about their ability to finance their college education. About two-thirds of them want to be employed while pursuing a Bachelor's Degree at BGSU. Being very well off financially, raising a family, and helping others who are in difficulty are among their most important life goals.

More than half of the entering freshman indicated that they were highly involved with athletics when they were in high school. Most of them are very optimistic about their chances of making at least a "B" average in their college classes, earning a Bachelor's Degree, finding a job in their major after graduation, and being satisfied with BGSU. The majority of them predict that it is unlikely for them to fail one or more courses, to transfer to another college before graduation, and to drop out college temporarily or permanently. Mathematics, however, remains the area where sizeable freshmen are concerned about their academic preparation for college work.

The major limitations of this study were the low response rate (27%) for the questionnaire and the over-representation of female respondents. These limitations require that the results from this survey be interpreted with some caution.

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