

REPORT OF THE RESULTS OF THE BGSU FIRST-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE 2012

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ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of the summer 2012 administration of the BGSU First-Year Student Questionnaire (BFYSQ) to main campus first time first-year full/part time freshmen. The BFYSQ is designed to collect enrollment management-related data not otherwise collected as a result of BGSU's admission and registration processes. 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 and modified this year.

All incoming new freshmen who participated in summer *SOAR* (Student Orientation, Advising and Registration) program were required to fill out the online version of BFYSQ this year. Total 3,309 students responded the survey, which represented about 91.4% (3309/3622) of the 2012 main campus first-time first-year full/part time freshman. This rate is higher than the one in 2011 (84%) and much higher than the ones in 2010(27%) and 2009(55%).

To examine how representative the survey respondents were of the population, the demographic characteristics of the 3309 survey respondents were compared to entire main campus first-time first-year full/part time freshman class. As indicated by the numbers on the table below, survey respondents, in general, mirror the population.

	2012 Survey Respondents	2012 First Time First Year Full/Part Time Freshman
Gender:		
Female	59.8%	59.0%
Male	40.2%	41.0%
Race:		
Minorities*	21.0%	21.5%
European-American	77.0%	75.6%
Other/Unknown	2.0%	2.9%
College:		
Arts and Sciences	29.3%	29.3%
Business Administration	11.7%	11.7%
Education and Human Development	21.5%	21.2%
Health and Human Services	12.2%	12.1%
Musical Arts	1.8%	1.8%
Technology	5.4%	5.6%
Academic Enhancement	18.1%	18.2%
Residential Status:		
In State Students	85.4%	84.4%
Out of State Students	14.5%	14.6%
International Students	0.1%	1.0%

* *Multi-race has been counted as minorities.*

BFYSQ results were analyzed by noting the percentages of participants who provided various responses to each questionnaire item. Results were also compared with those of similar questionnaire items that were administered by IR office in previous three years as well as the 2011 national norms for public four year Universities (<http://www.heri.ucla.edu/tfsPublications.php>). Percentages may not always sum to 100 due to rounding.

RESULTS

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT-RELATED INFORMATION

In addition to BGSU, to how many other colleges/universities did you apply for admission this year?

	BGSU				Public Univ.
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2011*
None	25%	23%	29%	27%	13%
One	24%	20%	23%	22%	9%
Two	23%	24%	22%	22%	12%
Three or More	28%	33%	27%	29%	66%

More than seventy percent of the 2012 survey respondents indicated that they have applied to one or more other college(s) besides BGSU. There was a slight increase in the number of students who applied to BGSU only in recent two years, a result that could reflect University's success in increasing its attractiveness for some applicants. Compared with students in other public four-year universities, BGSU students tend to apply to a few other institutions.

In addition to BGSU, to how many other colleges/universities were you admitted for this year?

	BGSU				Public Univ.
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2011
None	29%	28%	32%	32%	NA
One	29%	24%	28%	25%	NA
Two	21%	21%	19%	20%	NA
Three or More	21%	27%	21%	23%	NA

Most students who have applied for one or more other institutions were also admitted by one or more other schools.

Among the colleges/universities to which you applied, where was BGSU in relation to your top choice of institution?

	BGSU				Public Univ.
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2011
First Choice	82%	73%	83%	74%	59%
Second Choice	16%	23%	15%	22%	26%
Less Than Second Choice	2%	4%	2%	4%	15%

Seventy four percent of the 2012 entering freshmen reported that BGSU was their first choice. This number is higher than the national norm for public four-year universities in 2011, but is lower than the BGSU ones in 2011 and 2009.

* All the data under "Public Univ." in this report are weighted 2011 national norms for four-year public universities. Source: <http://www.heri.ucla.edu/tfsPublications.php>

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

	BGSU				Public Univ.
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2011
To prepare for a professional career	91%	86%	91%	91%	NA
It is now necessary to have a college degree	NA	NA	NA	84%	NA
To be able to get a better job	73%	74%	76%	75%	86%
To learn more about a subject(s) of great interest to me	NA	NA	NA	74%	NA
To be able to make more money	68%	65%	70%	72%	71%
To learn more about other people and to make me a more cultured person	NA	NA	NA	44%	NA
My parents wanted me to go	35%	36%	34%	36%	NA
I wanted to get away from home	24%	29%	26%	31%	NA
A mentor/role model encouraged me to go	14%	19%	16%	26%	NA

“To prepare for a professional career”, “to have a college degree”, “to be able to get a better job”, “to learn more about a subject(s) of great interest to me”, and “to be able to make more money” are the very important reasons for most 2012 freshmen to attend a college. Compared with the previous year’s cohorts, the 2012 cohort saw an increase in the numbers of students who rated “a mentor/role model encouraged me to go” highly. Compared with the students in other public universities, BGSU students were less likely to consider “to be able to get a better job” as a very important factor to attend a college/university.

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

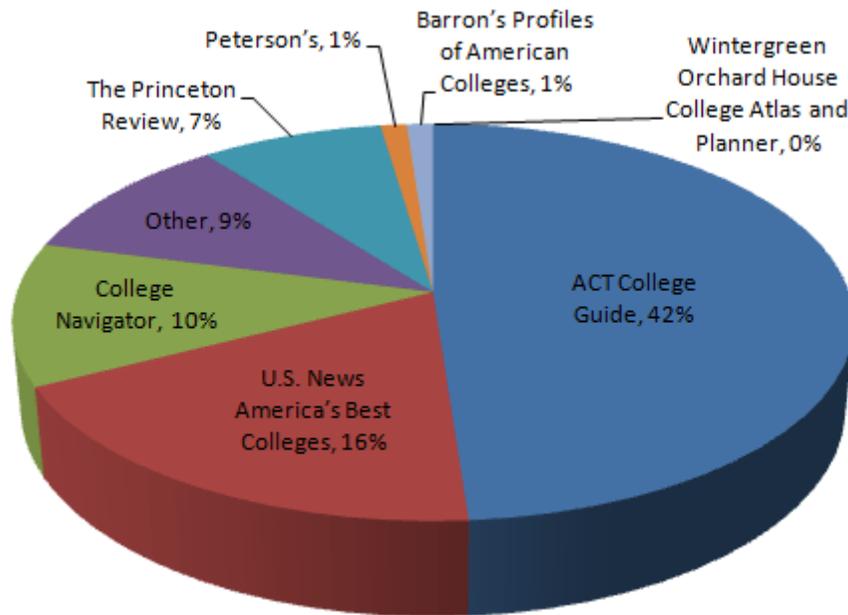
	BGSU				Public Univ.
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2011
Other factors about BGSU (e.g. size, safety, attractive campus)	NA	NA	NA	65%	NA
BGSU’s academic reputation and educational programs	NA	NA	NA	60%	66%
The reputation of BGSU's faculty/staff/students	37%	41%	39%	41%	NA
Cost of tuition at BGSU	35%	38%	33%	41%	41%
I was offered financial assistance	34%	36%	30%	41%	37%
The distance between BGSU and my home	NA	NA	NA	36%	NA
BGSU's rankings in national magazines and other publications	19%	30%	27%	28%	22%
A friend suggested/encouraged me attending	11%	12%	12%	16%	NA
The reputation of BGSU’s athletic teams	NA	NA	NA	14%	NA
My relatives wanted me to come here	8%	11%	9%	9%	5%
A teacher advised me	7%	9%	6%	9%	5%

A safe/attractive campus, BGSU’s size and academic reputation are the most important reasons for 2012 freshmen to choose BGSU. It is noticeable that compared with the students in 2009, 2010 and 2011, the 2012 students were more likely to cite “cost of tuition at BGSU”, “I was

offered financial assistance”, and “a friend suggested/encouraged me attending” as very important factors in selecting BGSU.

The 2012 BGSU freshmen were comparable with their peers elsewhere, except that 60% of them chose school’s academic reputation and educational programs as “very important” to them, whereas about 66% of freshmen in other four-year institutions did the same.

Which of the following publications and/or websites were important factors in your decision to attend BGSU? (2012 data only)



ACT College Guide is the only publication/website that sizable entering freshmen have used in making decision to attend BGSU.

DEMOGRAPHIC RELATED INFORMATION

Have you ever served or are currently serving in a branch of the U.S. Military or National Guard?

	<u>2012</u>
Previously served	0%
Currently serving	1%
Never served	99%

Your Parent's Occupation (2% or more of respondents in 2012 survey):

	Father's Occupation	Mother's Occupation
Other	28%	29%
Teacher or administrator		11%
Business	22%	14%
Nurse, Medical Technologist, other medical related		13%
Unemployed	5%	9%
Engineer	7%	
laborer	7%	2%
Accountant	3%	5%
Computer Programmer/Analyst	3%	3%
Law enforcement officer	2%	
Not applicable	5%	4%
Skilled trades	4%	
Homemaker		4%
Retired	2%	
Social, welfare, or recreation worker		2%

What is the highest level of formal education completed by your parents/guardians (2012 survey data)?

	Father's Education	Mother's Education
Middle School/Jr. High	2%	1%
High School/GED	40%	35%
College or beyond	52%	61%
Other /unknown	5%	3%
Not applicable	2%	1%

Mother and father completed high school/GED or middle school/Jr. high:	23%
At least one parent completed college or beyond:	73%
Both parents completed college or beyond:	40%

STUDENT FINANCES

How much of your first year's educational expenses do you expect to cover from each of the sources listed below (2012 data only)?

	Most and All	Some	Not Sure	None
Parents, relatives, friends	49%	35%	4%	12%
Federal Student Loan (Direct Loans, Perkins Loans, Nursing Loans)	30%	29%	14%	27%
BGSU funded grants/scholarships	22%	58%	7%	14%
Other Savings	20%	53%	6%	21%
Savings From Summer Work	18%	58%	4%	20%
Pell Grant	15%	21%	20%	44%
Federal Parent Loans (PLUS)	13%	16%	23%	48%
Private Student Loans	12%	18%	22%	49%
Other State Funded Grants	11%	20%	20%	50%
Other private funded grants/scholarship	11%	34%	13%	42%
Ohio College Opportunity Grants	9%	16%	21%	53%
Other than the above	4%	9%	30%	58%

Family is the greatest source of financial support for 2012 BGSU freshmen, followed by Federal Student Loan, BGSU funded grants/scholarships, other savings, and savings from summer work. While European American students were more likely to report that most or all of their first year's expenses come from their parents, relatives or friends, minority students were more likely say that Federal Student Loan (Direct Loans, Perkins Loans, Nursing Loans), Federal Parent Loans, Pell Grants, Ohio College Opportunity Grants, BGSU funded grants/scholarships, and other state funded grants are the major sources for their college education.

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

	<u>2012</u>
Extremely concerned	22%
Very concerned	27%
Somewhat concerned	33%
Not very concerned	14%
Not at all concerned	4%

One out of two survey respondents indicated that they were extremely or very concerned about their ability to finance their education. Minority students (69%) were more likely to say so than did European American students (44%).

PRECOLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Which of the following activities were you involved in at any point between 9th and 12th grade? If you have involved please indicate your level of involvement. (2012 data only)

	Yes, I have involved	Involvement Level*		
		Highly Involved	Moderately Involved	Not Very Involved
Athletics	71%	67%	27%	7%
Part-time job	67%	51%	42%	7%
Clubs (chemistry, chess, etc.)	51%	31%	50%	19%
Community service	48%	40%	47%	13%
Band, orchestra, choir or vocal ensemble	41%	57%	29%	14%
Academic honor society	27%	37%	49%	15%
Religious organizations	24%	45%	41%	14%
Theatre, Debate	22%	47%	40%	14%
Class officer, student council/government	22%	50%	37%	13%
Newspaper, Yearbook	17%	45%	41%	14%
Scouting /4H	8%	61%	28%	11%
Other	9%	61%	29%	10%
ROTC	1%	54%	32%	14%

**Highly Involved (e.g., leadership role, formal position); Moderately Involved (e.g., committee member, active participant); Not Very Involved (e.g., general member, volunteer)*

Athletics and part-time job are the top two activities that the majority of the 2012 freshmen were highly or moderately involved while they were in high school, followed by clubs, community service, and band/orchestra/choir/vocal ensemble. A quarter of them were an active member of an academic honor society, a debate or theatre team, and a religious or a student organization. Although a few students have participated in ROTC, Scouting/4H, and activities that are not listed on the survey, most of them were the leaders of the team(s).

EXPECTATIONS AND VALUES INFORMATION

Do you plan to have a job while attending BGSU?

	<u>2012</u>
Yes	66%
No	6%
Not sure	28%

Do you plan to have a job ...

	<u>2012</u>
On campus only	38%
Off campus only	8%
On and off campus	26%
Not sure	28%

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

	<u>2012</u>
1 to 9	9%
10 to 19	57%
20 to 29	22%
30 to 39	2%
40 or More	0.4%
Not sure	10%
None	0%

Since more than 80% of entering freshmen have expressed the concerns about their ability to finance their college education and 67% of them have worked while they were in high school it is not surprised to see that 66% of them plan to have a job while attending BGSU. Among those students who would like to be employed, 79% of them prefer to work 10-29 hours per week.

What is the highest degree you plan to obtain at any college or university?

	<u>2012</u>
Bachelor's (B.A., B.S., etc)	21%
Master's (M.A., M.S., M.F.A., etc.)	40%
Doctoral degree (Ph.D., Ed. D. or D.M.)	13%
M.D., D.D.S., D.M.V. (Doctor)	4%
LL.B or J.D. (Law)	2%
Other	0.3%
Not sure	20%

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

	<u>2012</u>
Bachelor's (B.A., B.S., etc)	61%
Master's (M.A., M.S., M.F.A., etc.)	22%
Doctoral degree (Ph.D., Ed. D. or D.M.)	3%
Other	0.3%
Not sure	14%

The most likely academic goal of 2012 freshmen is a Bachelor's degree at BGSU and a Master's degree or higher anywhere.

Your Probable Career Occupation (2% or more respondents in 2012 survey):

Other	18%
Teacher or administrator	15%
Business	13%
Undecided	13%
Nurse, Medical Technologist, other medical related	9%
Actor, Artist, or Musician	4%
Psychologist	4%
Therapist (physical, occ., speech)	4%
Writer or Journalist	3%
Accountant	2%
Physician or Dentist	2%
Scientific Researcher	2%
Computer Programmer/Analyst	2%
Lawyer (attorney) or Judge	2%
Law enforcement officer	2%

Regarding probable careers, “other” and “teacher or administrator” were chosen most often by 2012 freshmen, followed by “business”, “undecided” and “medical related field”. Females were more likely to pursue a career in education or medical related field, while males were more likely to prepare a job in business.

In which of the following subjects do you feel that you might need any academic support?

	<u>2012</u>
Mathematics	59%
Science	40%
Foreign Language	23%
English	26%
Reading	11%
Social Studies	11%
Other	1%

Mathematics and science are the two subjects in which sizeable entering freshmen feel that they might need academic support.

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

	BGSU				Public Univ.
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2011
get a Bachelor's Degree	85%	79%	86%	86%	NA
be satisfied with BGSU/your college	70%	63%	71%	78%	60%
vote in a national or state election	NA	NA	NA	71%	NA
find a job in your major field after graduation	74%	66%	71%	67%	NA
make at least a "B" average	41%	58%	56%	56%	67%
Join a student social organization, participate in volunteer or community service work, or be elected to a student office	NA	NA	NA	51%	NA
graduate with honors	14%	18%	14%	17%	NA
join a student professional or student government organization	10%	12%	9%	12%	NA
change your major	12%	14%	13%	10%	15%
play varsity/intercollegiate athletics	13%	13%	12%	10%	NA
change your career choice	11%	12%	12%	10%	14%
participate in social justice and political movements, protests/demonstrations	NA	NA	NA	6%	NA
need extra time to complete your degree	4%	9%	4%	3%	6%
get married while in college	2%	4%	2%	3%	NA
transfer to another college before graduation	3%	5%	3%	2%	5%
fail one or more courses	0.4%	0.8%	0.5%	0.4%	NA
experience a problem with alcohol or drugs	NA	NA	NA	0.3%	NA
drop out of college temporarily	0.2%	1.0%	0.1%	0.2%	NA
drop out of college permanently	0.2%	1.2%	0.2%	0.1%	NA

Upon entering BGSU, the majority of the 2012 freshmen (67% or more) were confident that they would vote in a national or state election, be satisfied with BGSU, get a Bachelor's degree, and find a job in their major field after graduation. Over 50% of them thought that they would make at least a "B" average for their class, join a student social organization, participate in volunteer or community service work, or be elected to a student office. Few of them expected that he/she would need extra time to complete his/her degree and transfer to another college before graduation. Almost none of them claimed that they would fail one or more courses, experience a problem with alcohol or drugs, and drop out college temporarily or permanently.

Compare with the students in other public four year universities, BGSU students were more likely to be satisfied with its institution, but less likely to be confident about their chance to make at least a "B" average for their class.

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

	BGSU				Public Univ.
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2011
being successful and well off financially	NA	NA	NA	95%	NA
raising a family	78%	79%	75%	83%	72%
helping others who are in difficulty	73%	75%	74%	83%	68%
having leadership responsibility for the work and development of others	NA	NA	NA	75%	NA
becoming an authority in my field and obtaining recognition from my colleagues for my contributions	NA	NA	NA	71%	NA
developing a meaningful philosophy of life and influencing political and social issues	NA	NA	NA	68%	NA
becoming successful in a business or organization of my own	NA	NA	NA	55%	NA
Acquiring a better understanding of and improving the physical and biological environment	NA	NA	NA	45%	NA
participating in a community action program and becoming a community leader	NA	NA	NA	44%	NA
writing original works, creating artistic works or being accomplished in the performing arts	NA	NA	NA	32%	NA
making a contribution in science or technology	NA	NA	NA	30%	NA

Being successful and very well off financially, raising a family, and helping others who are in difficulty continue to be the most important life goals that the majority of entering freshmen would like to achieve. Having leadership responsibilities, becoming an authority and successful in their field, developing a meaningful philosophy of life, and influencing political and social issues are the other targets that most of students would like to hit.

Compared with the freshmen in previous three years, as well as the freshmen at other four year public universities, the 2012 freshmen were more likely to cite “helping others in difficulty” and “raising a family” as their essential life objectives.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of the 2012 BGSU First-Year Student Questionnaire (BFYSQ), in general, are similar to those of “freshman survey” administered in 2009, 2010, and 2011.

BGSU students continue to be pragmatic and vocationally oriented. The 2012 freshmen apply and are admitted to few other institutions. BGSU is the first choice of 74% of our students. This number is higher than the national norm (59%) for public four year universities. Preparing for a professional career, having a college degree, getting a better job, being able to make more money, and learning more about a subject(s) of great interest to them were very important reasons for BGSU students to attend a college. The good academic reputation and educational programs coupled with the size of the campus as well as a safe/attractive environment are the principal reasons for them to choose BGSU. The most frequent academic goal for 2012 freshmen is a Bachelor’s degree in education, business, “other” or “undecided”, and life goal is being successful and well off financially.

The 2012 freshmen are mostly female, Caucasian, and in-state students. The majority of them claimed that at least one of their parents is a college graduate. Family is the greatest source of financial support. Minority students were also more likely than Caucasian students to depend on Federal/state/school funds to support their education. The vast majority of the entering freshmen expressed some level of concerns about their ability to finance college education and two thirds of them were planning to be employed during school year.

Upon entering the University, most of freshmen were very optimistic about their chances of making at least a "B" average for their class, getting a Bachelor's Degree, finding a job in their major field after graduation, and being satisfied with BGSU. The mass majority of them predicted that it is unlikely for them to fail one or more courses, take extra time to complete a degree, transfer to another college before graduation, and drop out college temporarily or permanently. The realities are different giving the facts that (1) the six-year graduation rate for BGSU is around 60%; (2) one-year first time first year fulltime freshmen retention rate in recent two years is around 70%; and (3) 59% of 2012 freshmen already expressed the needs in helping with Math, and 40% of them might need help in Science. These discrepancies suggests that as high confidence as our freshmen students have in themselves, their estimations of life in college might not be very realistic. As a result, working with students in coping with their first year at the University might become an important issue in helping students succeed at college.

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