

REPORT OF THE RESULTS OF THE BGSU FIRST-YEAR STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE 2013

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ABSTRACT

This report describes the results of the summer 2013 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 was modified in 2012 and 2013.

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. A total of 2979 students responded to the survey, which represented about 89% (2979/3348) of the 2013 main campus first-time first-year full-time and part-time freshman. This rate is slightly lower than that of 2012 (91%)

To examine how representative the survey respondents were of the population, the demographic characteristics of the 2979 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.

	2013 Survey Respondents	2013 First Time First Year Full/Part Time Freshman
Gender:		
Female	58.8%	58.8%
Male	41.2%	41.2%
Race:		
Minorities*	18.6%	19.8%
European-American	78.7%	77.5%
Other/Unknown	2.7%	2.6%
College:		
Arts and Sciences	29.7%	30.0%
Business Administration	12.9%	12.5%
Education and Human Development	22.5%	21.8%
Health and Human Services	12.2%	12.2%
Musical Arts	2.1%	2.1%
Technology, Architecture and Applied Engineering.	5.1%	5.2%
Academic Enhancement (pre-major)	15.5%	16.2%
Residential Status:		
In State Students	86.0%	85.2%
Out of State Students	13.8%	13.9%
International Students	0.2%	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. 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?

	2010	2011	2012	2013
None	23%	29%	27%	30%
One	20%	23%	22%	21%
Two	24%	22%	22%	21%
Three or More	33%	27%	29%	28%

How many other colleges/universities were you admitted for this year?

	2010	2011	2012	2013	
				Count	Percent
Applied for and were admitted by BGSU only	NA	NA	NA	903	30%
Applied for BGSU and one or more other colleges:					
Were admitted by BGSU only	NA	NA	NA	195	7%
Were admitted by BGSU and One Other U.	NA	NA	NA	683	23%
Were admitted by BGSU and Two Other Us	NA	NA	NA	569	19%
Were admitted by BGSU and Three or More	NA	NA	NA	629	21%

Among the colleges/universities to which you were admitted, where does BGSU rank?

	2010	2011	2012	2013	
				Count	Percent
BGSU was my only choice	NA	NA	NA	1098	37%
Were admitted by BGSU and one or more other Us:					
BGSU was my first choice	NA	NA	NA	1404	47%
BGSU was my second choice	NA	NA	NA	404	14%
BGSU was my less than second choice	NA	NA	NA	73	2%

About seventy percent (2076 out of 2979) of the 2013 survey respondents reported that they have applied to one or more other college(s) besides BGSU. Sixty three present of them indicated that they were admitted by BGSU and one or more other school(s), such as Kent State University, Ohio University, University of Toledo, and other in-state or out-of-state colleges/universities. Eighty four percent of them claimed that BGSU was their first or only choice.

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

	2010	2011	2012	2013
To prepare for a professional career	86%	91%	91%	91%
It is now necessary to have a college degree	NA	NA	84%	81%
To be able to get a better job	74%	76%	75%	76%
To learn more about a subject(s) of great interest to me	NA	NA	74%	76%
To be able to make more money	65%	70%	72%	72%
To learn more about other people and to make me a more cultured person	NA	NA	44%	46%
My parents wanted me to go	36%	34%	36%	32%
I wanted to get away from home	29%	26%	31%	32%
A mentor/role model encouraged me to go	19%	16%	26%	23%

"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 2013 freshmen to attend college. Compared with the previous year's cohorts, the 2013 cohort saw a decrease in "My parents wanted me to go" signifying that more freshmen entered college out of their own will. This points to a more serious and focused group of freshmen.

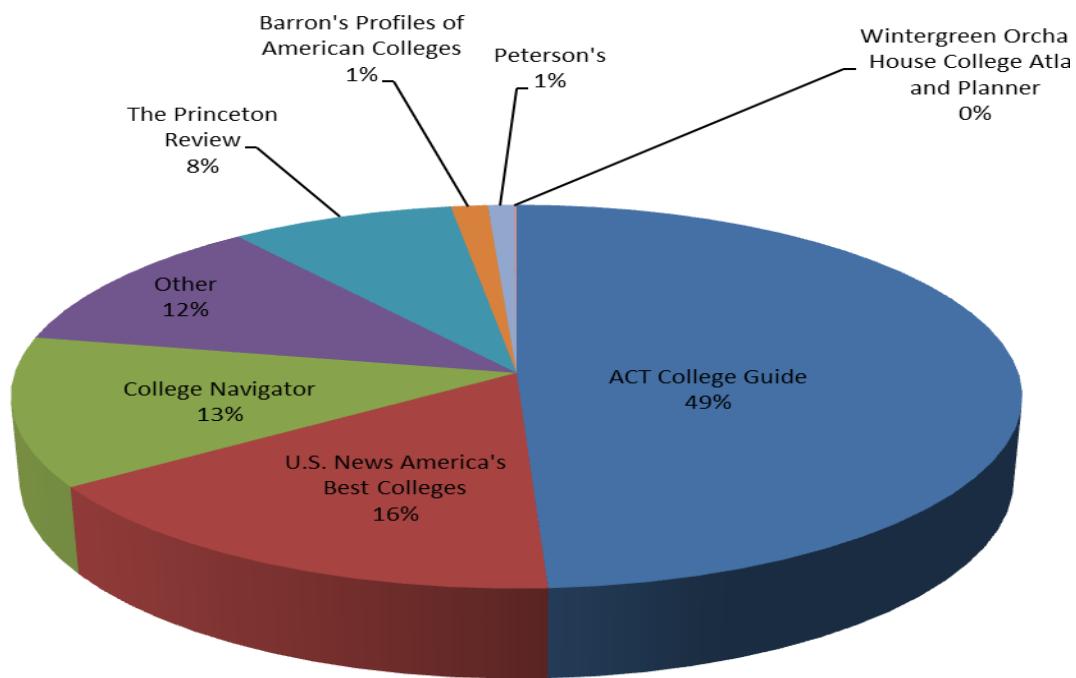
How important were each of the following in your decision to attend BGSU? (Percent "Very Important")

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Other factors about BGSU (e.g. size, safety, attractive campus)	NA	NA	65%	68%
BGSU's academic reputation and educational programs	NA	NA	60%	63%
The reputation of BGSU's faculty/staff/students	41%	39%	41%	49%
Cost of tuition at BGSU	38%	33%	41%	44%
I was offered financial assistance	36%	30%	41%	41%
The distance between BGSU and my home	NA	NA	36%	36%
BGSU's rankings in national magazines and other publications	30%	27%	28%	34%
The reputation of BGSU's athletic teams	NA	NA	14%	19%
A friend suggested/encouraged me attending	12%	12%	16%	16%
A teacher advised me	9%	6%	9%	9%
My relatives wanted me to come here	11%	9%	9%	8%

A safe/attractive campus, BGSU's size and academic reputation are the most important reasons for 2013 freshmen to choose BGSU. It is noticeable that compared to previous years, the 2013 freshmen were more likely to cite "The reputation of BGSU's faculty/staff/students" and "BGSU's rankings in national magazines and other publications" as very important factors in

selecting BGSU. “The reputation of BGSU’s athletic teams” saw a gain from 14% in 2012 to 19% in 2013 suggesting that BGSU’s athletic teams were making good impressions.

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



ACT College Guide remains the main publication/website that an ample number of 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?

	2012	2013
Previously served	0%	.3%
Currently serving	1%	.6%
Never served	99%	99%

Your Parent's Occupation (2% or more of respondents)

	2012		2013	
	Father's	Mother's	Father's	Mother's
Other	28%	29%	26%	27%
Business	22%	14%	25%	15%
Teacher or administrator		11%	4%	14%
Nurse, Medical Tech., other medical related		13%		13%
Engineer	7%		7%	
laborer	7%	2%	7%	2%
Unemployed	5%	9%	3%	6%
Skilled trades	4%		5%	
Accountant	3%	5%	3%	5%
Not applicable	5%	4%	4%	2%
Homemaker		4%		4%
Computer Programmer/Analyst	3%	3%	3%	3%
Retired	2%		3%	
Social, welfare, or recreation worker		2%		3%
Law enforcement officer	2%		2%	

What is the highest level of formal education completed by your parents/guardians (2013)?

	Father's Education	Mother's Education
Middle School/Jr. High	1%	1%
High School/GED	37%	35%
College or beyond	53%	61%
Other /unknown	5%	3%
Not applicable	2%	1%

	2012	2013
Mother and father completed high school/GED or middle school/Jr. high:	23%	17%
At least one parent completed college or beyond:	73%	76%
Both parents completed college or beyond:	40%	41%

STUDENT FINANCES

How much of your first year's educational expenses do you expect to cover from each of the sources listed below? (2013 data only)

	Most and All	Some	Not Sure	None
Parents, relatives, friends	45%	39%	4.2%	12%
Federal, State, BGSU funded grants/scholarships	32%	54%	5%	8.4%
Loans from all sources	22%	34%	13%	31%
Savings From Summer Work	14%	46%	14%	26%
Other Savings	20%	53%	6%	21%
Other private funded grants/scholarship	11%	45%	9%	35%

Family is the greatest source of financial support for 2013 BGSU freshmen, followed by “Federal, State, BGSU funded grants and/ other scholarships”. Minority students were more likely to report that a majority of their first year’s expenses were covered by grants and scholarships.

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

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Extremely concerned	NA	NA	22%	20%
Very concerned	22%	22%	27%	26%
Somewhat concerned	55%	60%	33%	34%
Not very concerned	NA	NA	14%	16%
Not at all concerned	23%	18%	4%	5%

Near half of the 2013 survey respondents indicated that they were extremely or very concerned about their ability to finance their education. Minority students (62%) were more likely to say so than European American students (41%).

Do you plan to have a job while attending BGSU?

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Yes	NA	NA	66%	64%
No	NA	NA	6%	6%
Not sure	NA	NA	28%	30%

Since 80% of entering freshmen have expressed some concerns about their ability to finance their college education (see the table above), it is not surprising to see that 64% of them plan to have a job while attending BGSU.

Do you plan to have a job ...

	2010	2011	2012	2013
On campus only	NA	NA	38%	35%
Off campus only	NA	NA	8%	9%
On and off campus	NA	NA	26%	28%
Not sure	NA	NA	28%	28%

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

	2010	2011	2012	2013
1 to 9	NA	NA	9%	8%
10 to 19	NA	NA	57%	56%
20 to 29	NA	NA	22%	20%
30 to 39	NA	NA	2%	2%
40 or More	NA	NA	0.4%	0.7%
Not sure	NA	NA	19%	13%
None	NA	NA	0%	0%

Among those students who would like to be employed, 76% of them would prefer to work 10-29 hours per week.

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. (2013 data only)

	Yes, I have involved	Involvement Level*		
		Highly Involved	Moderately Involved	Not Very Involved
Athletics	70%	68%	26%	6%
Part-time job	68%	52%	42%	6%
Clubs (chemistry, chess, etc.)	52%	32%	51%	18%
Community service	50%	41%	45%	14%
Band, orchestra, choir or vocal ensemble	39%	59%	27%	14%
Academic honor society	27%	37%	52%	12%
Religious organizations	25%	45%	41%	14%
Theatre, Debate	22%	47%	38%	15%
Class officer, student council/government	20%	48%	41%	11%
Newspaper, Yearbook	15%	42%	40%	18%
Scouting /4H	9%	66%	24	9%
Other	9%	61%	28%	12%
ROTC	1%	42%	31%	28%

**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 were the top two activities that majority of the 2013 freshmen were involved while in high school, followed by clubs and community service. A quarter or more of them were an active member of a band, orchestra, choir or vocal ensemble, an academic honor society, and a religious organization. Although a few students have participated in 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

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

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bachelor's (B.A., B.S., etc)	NA	NA	21%	27%
Master's (M.A., M.S., M.F.A., etc.)	NA	NA	40%	38%
Doctoral degree (Ph.D., Ed. D. or D.M.)	NA	NA	13%	12%
M.D., D.D.S., D.M.V. (Doctor)	NA	NA	4%	4%
LL.B or J.D. (Law)	NA	NA	2%	2%
Other	NA	NA	0.3%	0.2%
Not sure	NA	NA	20%	18%

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

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bachelor's (B.A., B.S., etc)	NA	NA	61%	67%
Master's (M.A., M.S., M.F.A., etc.)	NA	NA	22%	18%
Doctoral degree (Ph.D., Ed. D. or D.M.)	NA	NA	3%	3%
Other	NA	NA	0.3%	0.1%
Not sure	NA	NA	14%	12%

How many years do you expect it will take you to graduate from BGSU?

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Do not plan to graduate from BGSU	NA	NA	NA	0.5%
2-3 years	NA	NA	NA	3%
4 years	NA	NA	NA	86%
More than 4 years	NA	NA	NA	10%

The most likely academic goal of 2013 freshmen is a Bachelor's degree at BGSU and a Master's degree or higher anywhere. Eighty nine percent of them expect to graduate from BGSU in 4 years or less, which is much higher than the actual four year graduation rate for BGSU's first-time first-year full-time freshmen (less than 40%).

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

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Mathematics	NA	NA	59%	56%
Science	NA	NA	40%	40%
Foreign Language	NA	NA	23%	24%
English	NA	NA	26%	27%
Reading	NA	NA	11%	13%
Social Studies	NA	NA	11%	13%
Other	NA	NA	1%	2%

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

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

	2012	2013
Teacher or administrator	15%	17%
Other	18%	14%
Business	13%	14%
Nurse, Medical Technologist, other medical related	9%	10%
Undecided	13%	9%
Actor, Artist, or Musician	4%	5%
Psychologist	4%	4%
Therapist (physical, occ., speech)	4%	4%
Writer or Journalist	3%	3%
Accountant	2%	3%
Scientific Researcher	2%	3%
Computer Programmer/Analyst	2%	3%
Physician or Dentist	2%	2%
Lawyer (attorney) or Judge	2%	2%
Law enforcement officer	2%	2%

“Teacher or administrator”, “other”, and “Business” were chosen most often by 2013 freshmen, followed by “medical related filed” and “undecided”.

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

	2010	2011	2012	2013
get a Bachelor's Degree	79%	86%	86%	89%
be satisfied with BGSU	63%	71%	78%	86%
make at least a "B" average	58%	56%	56%	69%
vote in a national or state election	NA	NA	71%	66%
find a job in your major field after graduation	66%	71%	67%	64%
Join a student social organization, participate in volunteer or community service work, or be elected to a student office	NA	NA	51%	55%
graduate with honors	18%	14%	17%	21%
play varsity/intercollegiate athletics	13%	12%	10%	12%
join a student professional or government org.	12%	9%	12%	11%
participate in social justice and political movements, protests/demonstrations	NA	NA	6%	11%
change your career choice	12%	12%	10%	10%
change your major	14%	13%	10%	9%
get married while in college	4%	2%	3%	3%
transfer to another college before graduation	5%	3%	2%	2%
need extra time to complete your degree	9%	4%	3%	2%
fail one or more courses	0.8%	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%
experience a problem with alcohol or drugs	NA	NA	0.3%	0.2%
drop out of college temporarily	1.0%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%
drop out of college permanently	1.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%

Compared with the freshmen in previous three years, the 2013 freshmen were more likely to say that it is very good for them to make at least a "B" average for their classes, be satisfied with BGSU, get a Bachelor's Degree, and graduate with honors. Few of them expected that he/she would need extra time to complete his/her degree or 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.

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

	2010	2011	2012	2013
being successful and well off financially	NA	NA	95%	95%
helping others who are in difficulty	75%	74%	83%	85%
raising a family	79%	75%	83%	82%
having leadership responsibility for the work and development of others	NA	NA	75%	78%
becoming an authority in my field and obtaining recognition from my colleagues for my contributions	NA	NA	71%	78%
developing a meaningful philosophy of life and influencing political and social issues	NA	NA	68%	75%
becoming successful in a business or organization of my own	NA	NA	55%	53%
participating in a community action program and becoming a community leader	NA	NA	44%	51%
Acquiring a better understanding of and improving the physical and biological environment	NA	NA	45%	45%
making a contribution in science or technology	NA	NA	30%	33%
writing original works, creating artistic works or being accomplished in the performing arts	NA	NA	32%	32%

Being successful and very well off financially, helping others who are in difficulty and raising a family continue to be the most important life goals that the majority of entering freshmen would like to achieve. Compared with the 2012 freshmen, the 2013 freshmen were more likely to indicate that it is essential or very important for them to have leadership responsibilities, become an authority in their fields, develop a meaningful philosophy of life, and participate in a community action program.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The 2013 entering freshmen continue to be practical and vocationally oriented. Two out of three of them applied and were admitted to one or more Universities other than BGSU. Eighty four percent of them claimed that BGSU was their first or only choice. The critical reasons for them to attend a college are preparing for a professional career, having a college degree, getting a better job, learning more about a subject(s) of great interest to them, and being able to make more money. The good academic reputation and educational programs coupled with the size of the campus as well as a safe/attractive environment are the principal factors for them to choose BGSU. Other reasons which gained weight this year were the reputation of BGSU's faculty/staff/students, BGSU's ranking in national magazine and other publications, and the reputation of BGSU athletic teams. The most frequent academic goal for 2013 freshmen is a Bachelor's degree in education, business, or "other", and their life goal is to be successful and well off financially.

The 2013 freshmen are mostly female, Caucasian, and in-state students. The majority of them reported that at least one of their parents is a college graduate. In fact, the 2013 freshman group reported the higher number of college educated parents as well as the lower number of unemployed parents than the 2012 group. This may suggest that parents would be in the position to encourage their freshman children to succeed in their academics both morally and financially. Family continues to be the greatest source of financial support. The vast majority of the entering freshmen expressed some level of concerns about their ability to finance college education and almost two thirds of them were planning to be employed during school year.

The 2013 freshmen have higher academic expectations than 2012 freshmen. They were more optimistic about their chance to make at least a "B" average for their classes (69% in 2013 vs. 56% in 2012), become an authority in their field of study (78% in 2013 vs. 71% in 2012), graduate with honors (21% in 2013 vs. 17% in 2012), and receive a Bachelor's Degree from BGSU in four years or less (89% in 2013. No data for 2012). The mass majority of them anticipated that it would be highly unlikely for them to transfer to another college before graduation, and drop out college temporarily or permanently. Would these optimistic views become realities? The facts are (1) the four-year graduation rate for BGSU is less than 40%; (2) one-year first time first year fulltime freshmen retention rate in recent two years is around 70%; and (3) 56% of 2013 freshmen already expressed the needs in helping with Math, and 40% of them might need help in Science. These discrepancies suggest that even though the 2013 freshmen class has a higher college entry scores as well as stronger confidence in their ability to handle college work, their estimations of life in college might not be very realistic. As a result, working with students in coping with their needs at the University might become an important issue in helping them succeed at college as well as in helping BGSU to raise its retention and graduation rate.

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