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Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing • Western Washington University

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A PROFILE OF THE 2006 WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY GRADUATING CLASS

Prepared by Gary R. McKinney and Chris Stark

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Information for this research summary was obtained from the Student Tracking System, jointly maintained by the Registrar's Office and the Office of Institutional Assessment, Research, and Testing (OIART). The report presents information intended to provide insights into the various characteristics of 2006 Western Washington University graduates (academic year: fall quarter, 2005, through summer quarter, 2006).

Western graduated 2771 students in 2006—by one student its largest graduating class to date. There were 2770 graduates in 2005, 2717 in 2004, 2648 in 2003, and 2755 in 2002 (third largest). For students listing their ethnicity—many opt not to—the 2006 class was comprised of 16.5% ethnic-minorities, the highest percent to date, up from the previous high of 15% in both 2005 and 2003. Females made up 57% of 2006 graduates, nearly equal to 2005, 58%, but down from 61% in 2004. Transfers made up 40% of 2006 graduates, down significantly from 46% in

2005. (In 2000 transfers made up 52% of graduates, and 51% in 1999 and 1998.)

For those students earning BS degrees, 44% were females, the second highest in 20 years. Indeed, in the last 20 years, females have accounted for 40% or more of the BS degrees awarded six times: 44% in 2004, 40% in 2003, 44% in 2001, 40% in 2000, and 42% in 1991.

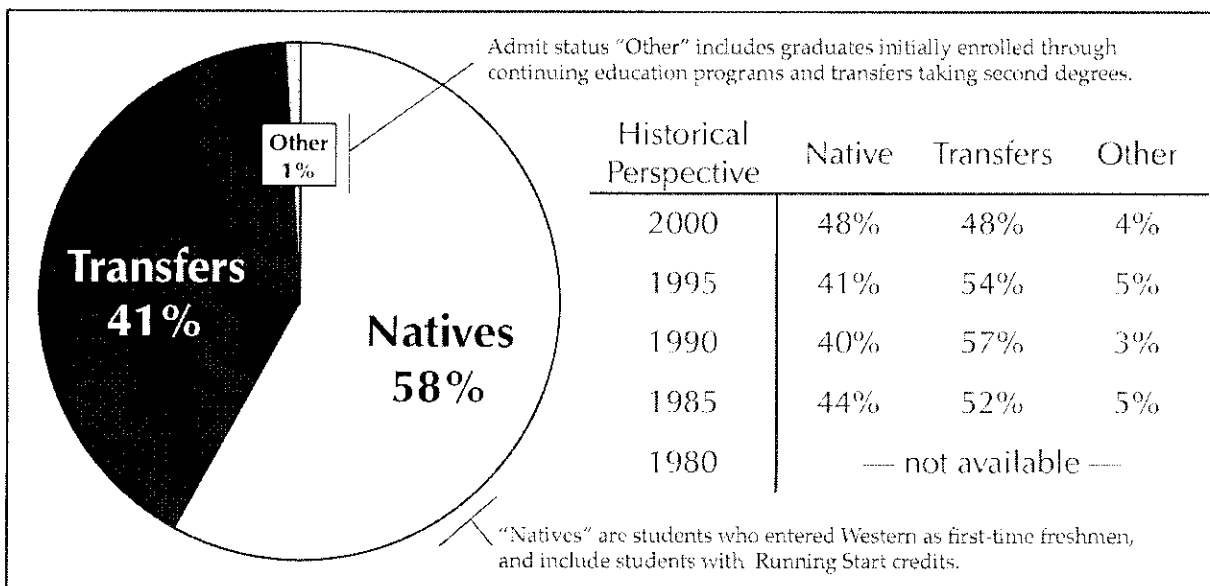
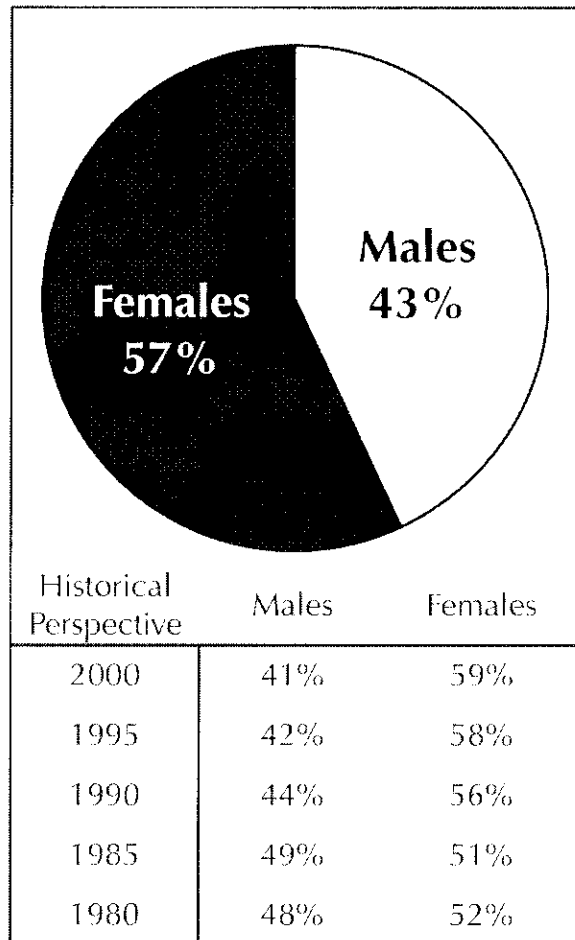
The Graduation Efficiency Index (GEI)—a formula that measures degree attainment efficiency via credits earned—was 89% for the class of 2006, just slightly up from 88% in 2005. In 2005, the GEI was 83%. However, it should be noted that the GEI formula was altered in 2005 to align with statewide usage, with credits toward the minor now factored in. The overall GEI for natives was 91%, and for transfers was 86%.

The overall Western grade point average for 2006 graduates was 3.13. (Compared to 3.14 in 2005, 3.13 in 2004, 3.12 in 2003, 3.14 in 2002, 3.15 in 2001, 3.12 in 2000, 3.13 in 1999, 3.15 in 1998, 3.16 in 1997, and 3.15 in 1996.)

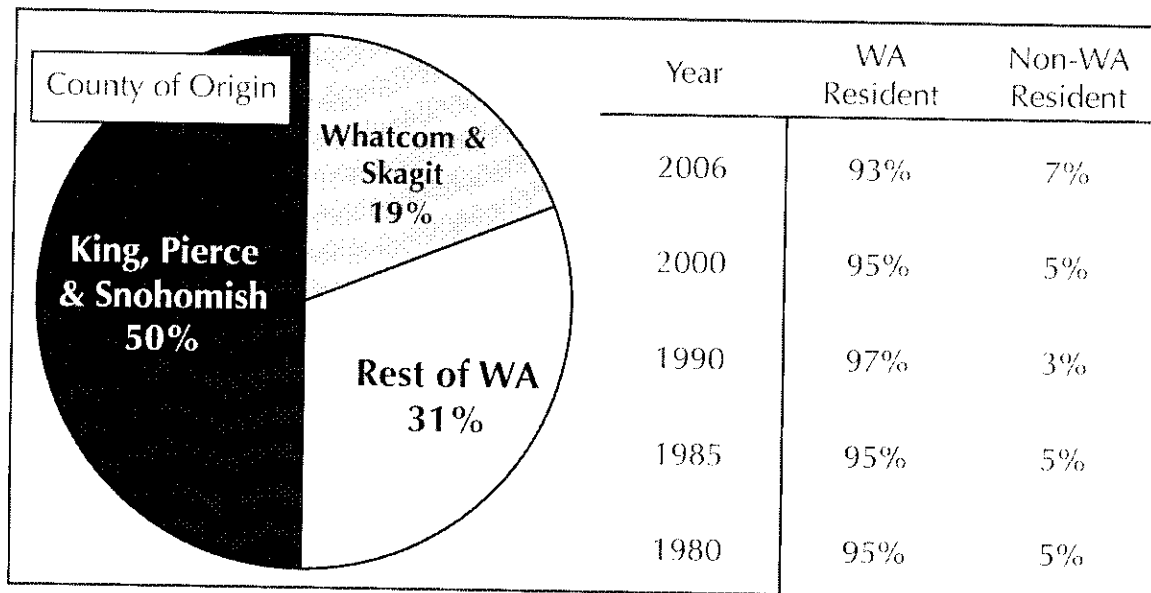
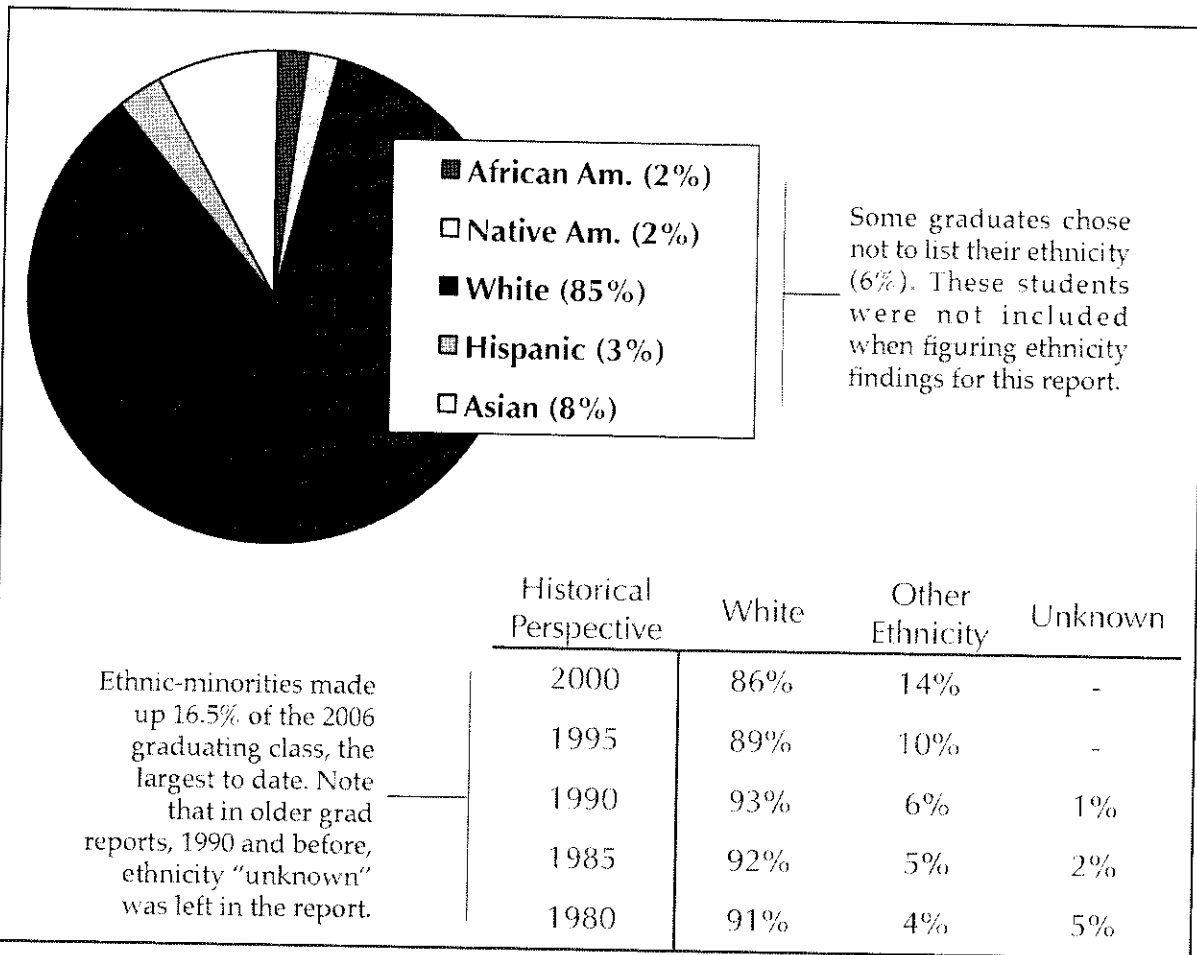


DEMOGRAPHICS

- There were 2771 graduates in 2006 (fall quarter, 2005, through summer quarter, 2006), Western's largest graduating class to date.
- Most graduates began attending classes in a fall quarter (85%).
- The youngest graduate was 20 years old; the oldest was 68. The most common age of graduates (the mode) was 23.
- Most graduates were between the ages of 21 to 24 years old (74%); fewer were between 25-29 years old (16%), 30-39 years old (4%), and 40 years old or older (2%).
- Disabilities were listed by 130 graduates (5%), including hearing, mobility, learning, visual, health, neuro/central nervous system, psychological, speech-language.
- There were 55 veterans graduating (2.5%).



DEMOGRAPHICS



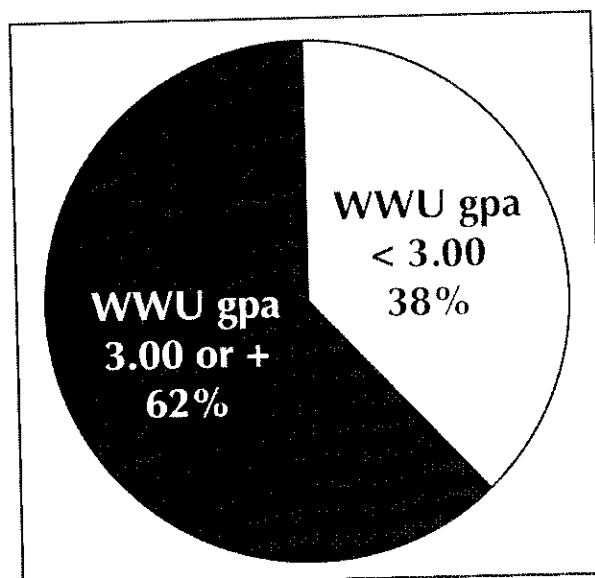
2006 GRADUATES OF

GRADES

In 2006, graduates overall earned a 3.13 WWU GPA

Female graduates earned a WWU GPA of 3.21

Male graduates earned a WWU GPA of 3.03



- The average hsgpa for 2006 Western graduates was 3.50; the average SAT Composite score was 1100. The average Admissions Index (AI) was 57 (out of 100).
- The average hsgpa for females was 3.56, and for males 3.40.
- The average hsgpa for natives was 3.53 (n=1540); for transfers including hsgpa in their files (n=332), the average was 3.32.

Honors were earned by 9% of Western's 2006 graduates: 148 graduates earned Cum Laude, and 83 graduates earned Magna Cum Laude.

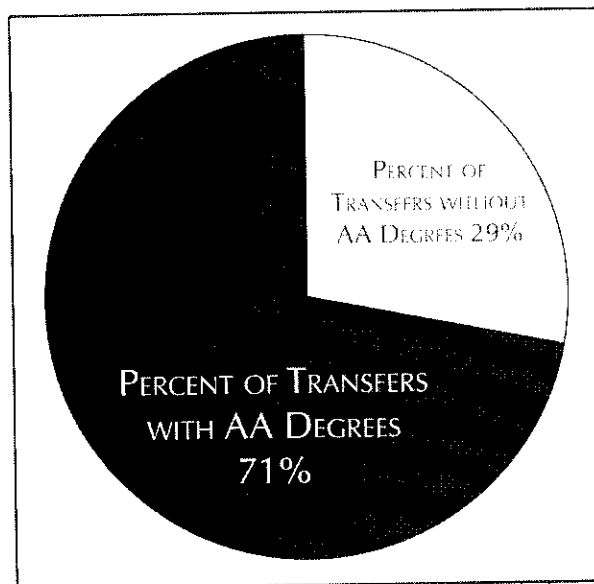
Historical Perspective	Honors
2000	11%
1995	10%
1990	8%
1985	6%
1980	6%

When noting the high school grade point average (hsgpa) or SAT scores of Western's 2006 graduates, it should be kept in mind that most cases are for native students (hsgpa = 80%; SAT = 80%). Transfer students with AA degrees do not need to include these records when applying for admission.

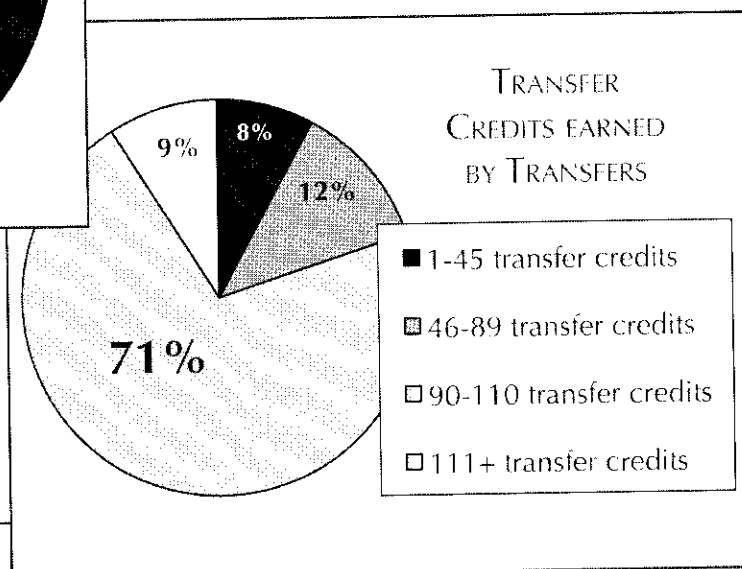
Historical Perspective	WWU gpa	HS gpa
2000	3.12	3.52
1995	3.14	3.34
1990	3.07	3.18
1985	3.03	3.23
1980	3.10	3.24

TRANSFER FACTS

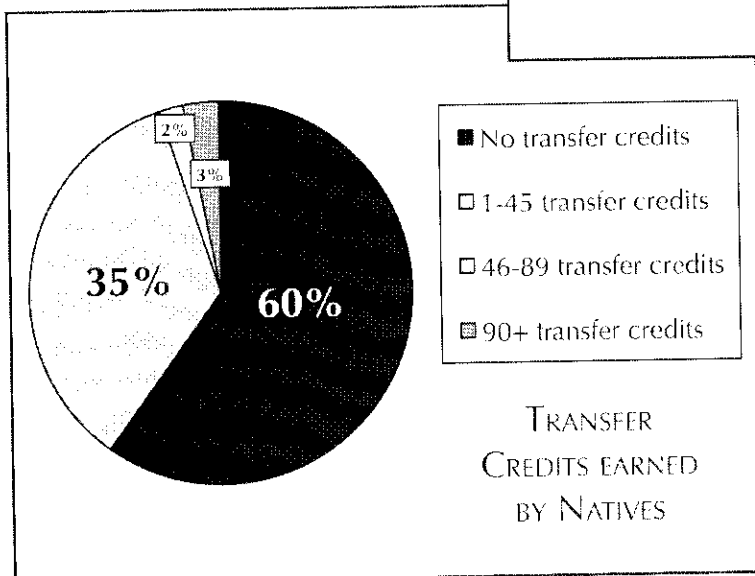
A fairly high percentage (40.5%) of graduates who entered Western as first-time freshmen (natives) earned credits towards graduation from schools other than Western. In other words, only about 60% of native graduates actually earned all their academic credits at Western. Also, because Running Start students are considered natives regardless of the number of college credits they've earned, AA degrees had been earned by 47 natives.



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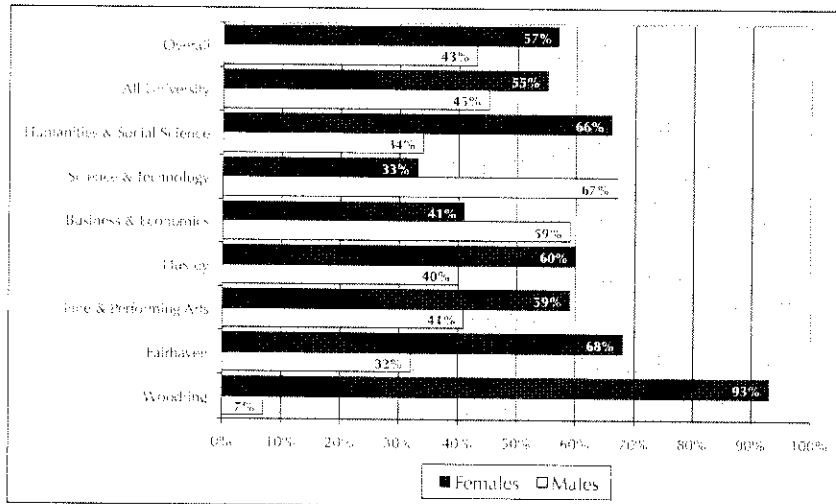
"Natives" are students who entered Western as first-time freshmen.



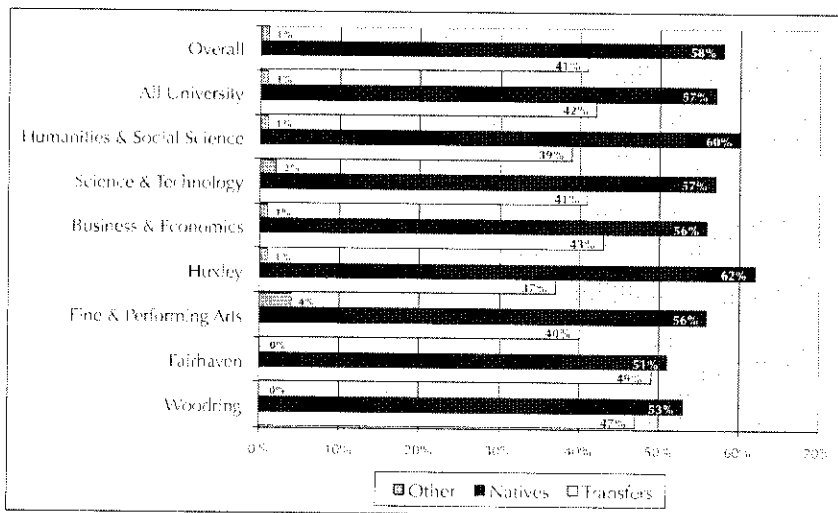
By age, average number of credits transferred:

20 or less = 87 credits
 21-22 = 32 credits
 23-24 = 31 credits
 25-29 = 71 credits
 30-39 = 75 credits
 40+ = 92 credits

COLLEGE OF GRADUATION



SUBCOLLEGE BREAKOUTS



Admit status "Other" includes graduates initially enrolled through continuing education programs and transfers taking second degrees.

The College of Arts & Sciences officially divided into the College of Humanities & Social Sciences and the College of Science & Technologies in 2005.

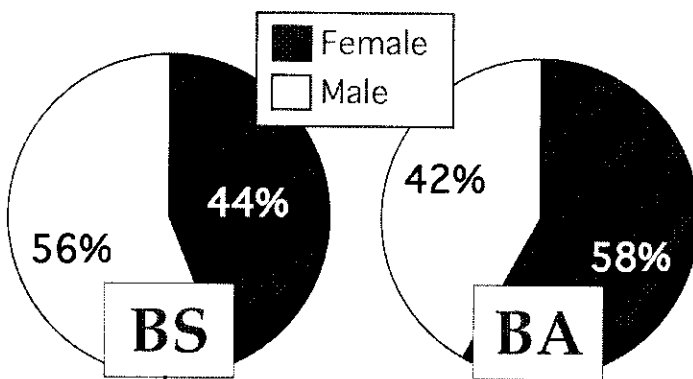
For 2006 graduates, Humanities and Social Sciences graduated the most students (46%), followed by Business & Economics (18%), Science & Technologies (13%), then Fine & Performing Arts and Huxley College (both 6%), Fairhaven College (4%), and Woodring College (3%). Another 4% graduated with All-University degrees, which is currently not housed in a particular college.

NOTE: For the last eight years, students have graduated in General Studies, a cross-disciplinary major, and earned All-University degrees.

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

DEGREES

Most 2006 graduates earned BA Degrees (75%), followed by BS Degrees (18%), BA/Ed Degrees (6%), BMUS Degrees (<1%), and BFA Degrees (<1%). Relative to their overall proportions (females = 57%; males = 43%), females were more likely to earn BA/Ed degrees (females = 82%), while males were more likely to earn BS degrees (males = 56%). This year, relative to their overall proportions (natives = 58%; transfers = 41%), the ratio of transfers and natives earning BA degrees remained constant (natives = 58%; transfers = 41%), and less likely to earn BA/Ed degrees (natives = 57%; transfers = 43%).

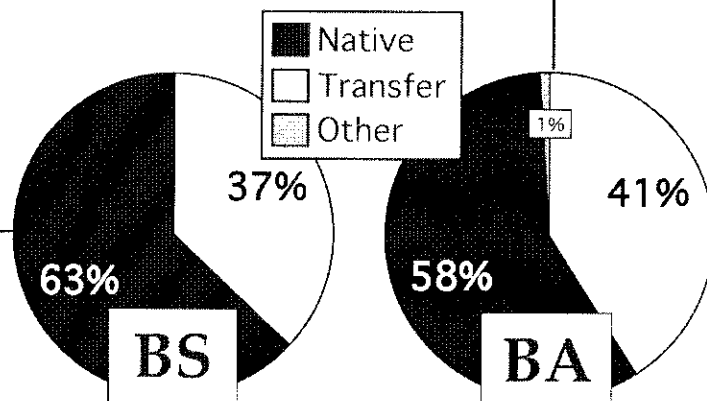


Historical Perspective	Male BA	Female BA
2000	41%	59%
1995	41%	59%
1990	40%	60%
1985	49%	51%
1980	46%	54%

Historical Perspective	Male BS	Female BS
2000	59%	41%
1995	63%	37%
1990	68%	32%
1985	62%	38%
1980	66%	34%

Historical Perspective	Native BA	Transfer BA	Other BA
2000	50%	46%	4%
1995	41%	54%	5%
1990	39%	57%	4%
1985	44%	52%	4%
1980	not available		

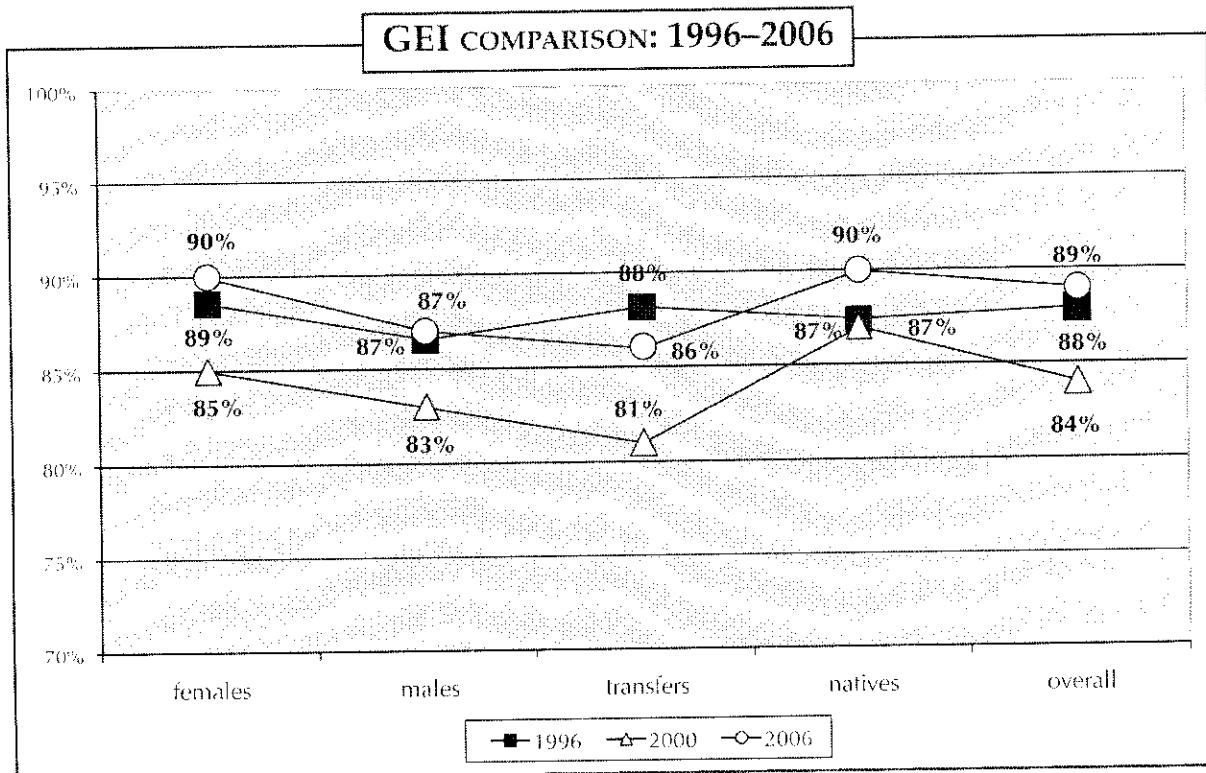
Historical Perspective	Native BS	Transfer BS	Other BS
2000	52%	45%	3%
1995	44%	51%	5%
1990	42%	55%	3%
1985	50%	48%	2%
1980	not available		



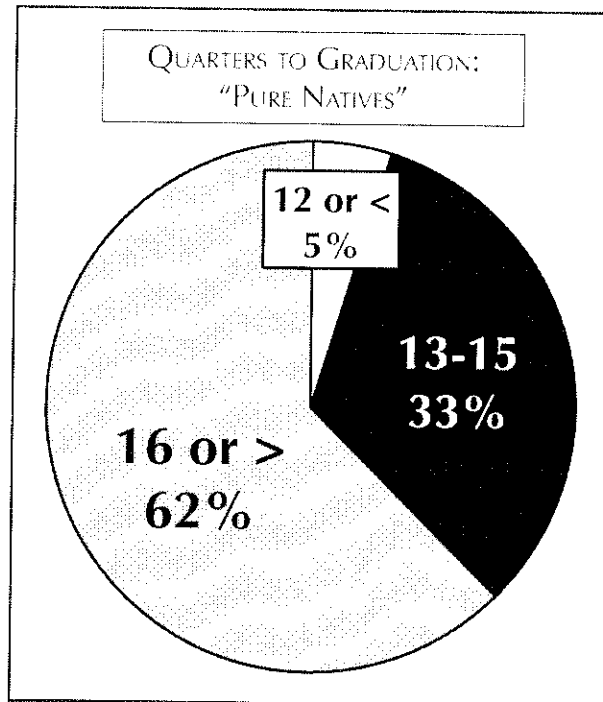
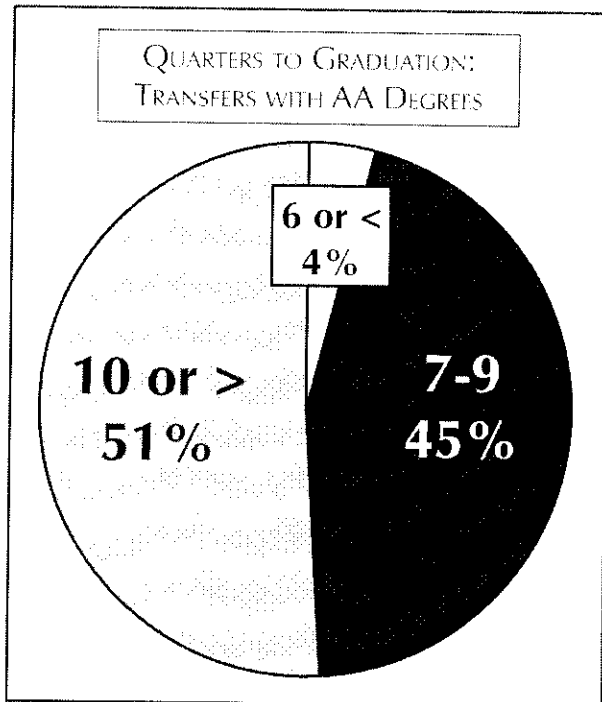
GRADUATION EFFICIENCY INDEX

Previous graduate reports have highlighted issues of time-to-degree efficiency. Included in this year's report are measures such as the number of quarters attended before graduation and the Graduation Efficiency Index (GEI). The GEI does not track linear time to graduation, but rather student credit efficiency. Its formula utilizes transfer credits (if any), the number of credits earned, and the number of credits needed to earn the degree. In 2005, the number of credits needed to earn a minor were also factored into the formula, a copy of which can be requested from the OIART. Using the GEI formula, a student who earns no more than the necessary number of credits for graduation has achieved 100% efficiency.

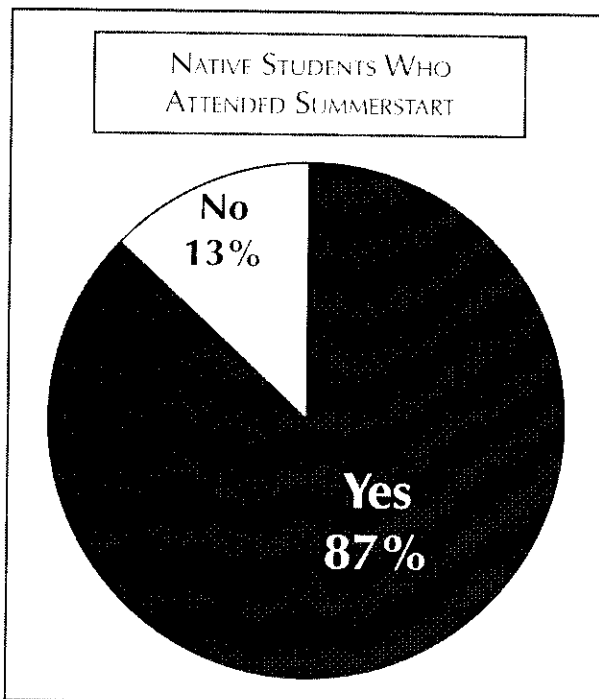
The overall GEI for 2006 graduates was 89%. For natives the GEI was 90%, and for transfers 86%. For females the GEI was 90%, and for males 87%. For graduates with BA degrees the GEI was 90%, and for graduates with BS degrees 86%. (See the figure below for 1996-2006 GEI comparisons.)



TIME TO DEGREE

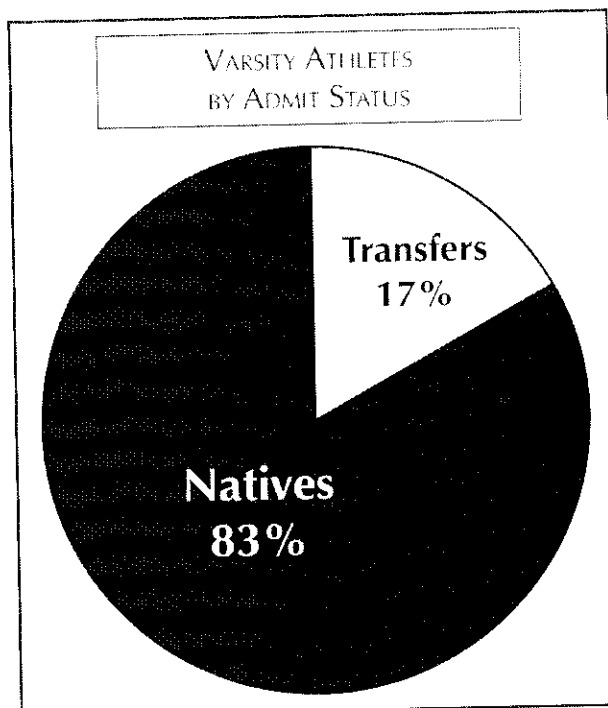
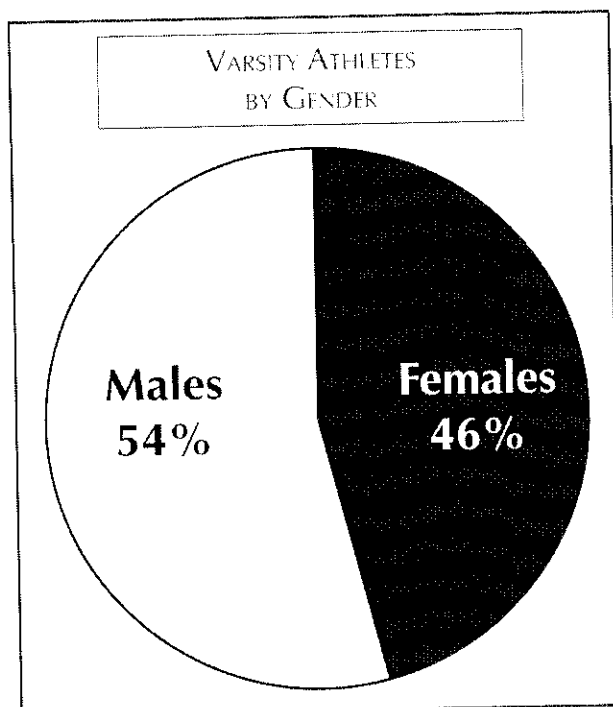


Traditionally, a transfer with an AA degree might be expected to graduate within six quarters, while a "pure" native (a native graduate who earned Western credits only, no outside credits) might be expected to graduate within twelve quarters.



- Studies have indicated that participation in orientation programs has had a positive effect on time-to-degree efficiency.
- Summerstart is the freshman orientation program, first offered in 1986.
- Transitions is the summer orientation program for transfers, first offered in 1994.

ATHLETES



- There were 141 graduates from the class of 2006 who had participated in varsity athletics (class of 2005 = 141; 2004 = 99; 2003 = 115; 2002 = 126; 2001 = 133; 2000 = 124; 1999 = 124; 1998 = 131; 1997 = 136; 1996 = 141).
- For those graduating athletes listing their ethnicity (136 of 141), most were White (92%), followed by Asian and Hispanic (3% each), Black (2%), and American Indian (1%).
- Graduating varsity athletes earned degrees in 31 different departments, including 10% in PEHR, 9% in Recreation, 5% in General Studies, and 7% in Business.
- Varsity athletes were slightly more likely to earn honors as graduates overall (8.5% athletes vs. 8.3% overall).

Varsity athletes overall earned a 3.02 Western gpa. Male athletes earned a 2.96 and female athletes a 3.09. Native athletes earned a 3.03 and transfer athletes a 2.97.

2006 Varsity Athlete Graduates

Sport	N	%
Track	33	23%
Crew	31	22%
Football	24	17%
Cross Country	16	11%
Soccer	15	10%
Basketball	12	9%
Fast Pitch	5	4%
Golf	4	3%
Volleyball	1	1%
	141	100%

PREDICTORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

- Analyses by statistical correlation indicated that the variable with the strongest positive correlation with Western gpa was the Admissions Index ($r = .549$; $p < .000$). Although high school gpa and overall SAT score also had fairly strong correlations to Western gpa ($r = .408$; $p < .001$ and $r = .405$, $p < .000$ respectively), neither indicator alone was as strong as the Admissions Index, which is a mathematical formula that combines high school gpa and pre-college test scores into one synthesized figure. Mostly, the AI was included in the records of first-time, in-coming freshmen. Transfers, especially those with AA degrees, do not need to include either the AI or their high school grade point average in their application packets to Western. The Admissions Index is utilized statewide and has a scale of 0-100. Recently, the calculation for the AI was revised, and the average AI for 2006 Western graduates, 57.0, reflects that change. (The AI was 65.5 in 2005, 56.6 in 2004, 65.4 in 2003, 66.9 in 2002 and 66.4 in 2001, and 65.1 in 2000.) The strong positive correlation between the AI and Western gpa indicates that when using Western gpa as the success criterion, the Admissions Index is a reliable predictor of academic success at Western.
- Regression analysis was also performed on the data. This statistic helps to indicate which of a number of variables can predict the score of a dependent variable (in this case, Western gpa). This test was performed on "Pure Natives" only, those students who had entered Western as freshmen and not taken any transfer credits. Statistically, this cohort offered the most coherent analysis, for the following reasons: a) all their credits were taken at Western, and b) high school gpa, pre-college test scores, and the Admissions Index were included in their records. For "Pure Natives" the Admissions Index proved the strongest predictor of Western gpa ($R^2 = .361$). In other words, 36.1% of the variance in Western gpa could be explained by the Admissions Index of the "Pure Native" cohort.
- In summary, if a variable was needed that might help predict how well an in-coming freshman might perform at Western, using Western gpa as the criterion for success, the AI would currently be the best.



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