

5-1-2008

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) Spring, 2007, Follow-Up Survey of Students Who Had Entered as Freshman in the Fall, 2003

Gary R. McKinney
Western Washington University


Beth Hartsoch
Western Washington University

Richard Bulcroft
Western Washington University

Linda Clark
Western Washington University

Joseph E. Trimble
Western Washington University

Follow this and additional works at: http://cedar.wwu.edu/surveyresearch_docs

 Part of the [Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McKinney, Gary R.; Hartsoch, Beth; Bulcroft, Richard; Clark, Linda; and Trimble, Joseph E., "Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) Spring, 2007, Follow-Up Survey of Students Who Had Entered as Freshman in the Fall, 2003" (2008). *Office of Survey Research*. 517.

http://cedar.wwu.edu/surveyresearch_docs/517

WESTERN EDUCATIONAL LONGITUDINAL STUDY (WELS)
SPRING, 2007, FOLLOW-UP SURVEY OF STUDENTS WHO
HAD ENTERED AS FRESHMEN IN THE FALL, 2003

REPORT 2008-04

Gary R. McKinney
Beth Hartsoch
Richard Bulcroft
Linda Clark
Joseph E. Trimble

May, 2008

Table of Contents

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) Spring, 2007, Follow-up Survey of Students Who Had Entered as Freshmen in the Fall, 2003

Introduction	2-3
Major & Minor	
Declaring and Changing Majors	4-6
Current Major	7
Minor	7-8
Plans for Future	
Education Plans	9
Employment	9
WWU Graduation and Satisfaction	10-11
Engagement	
Service Learning	12
Course Experiences	13
Capstone Experience	14
Writing Proficiency	
WP Course Experiences	15
Completed WP Requirement	15-18
Assignments and Exams	19
Forms of Instruction	20-21
Writing Skills	22-23
Effectiveness	23-24
Portfolio	24-26
Compared with Other Courses	26
Non-WP Courses	
Forms of Instruction	27-28
Writing Skills	29-30
Academic Advising	31
Academic Skills and Competencies	32
General Studies	
General Studies Major	33
General Studies Advising	34

WESTERN EDUCATIONAL LONGITUDINAL STUDY (WELS) SPRING, 2007, FOLLOW-UP SURVEY OF STUDENTS WHO HAD ENTERED AS FRESHMEN IN THE FALL, 2003

WELS BACKGROUND

The Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) is a series of internal longitudinal surveys of all in-coming first-year and transfer students administered every two-three years. This study involves an initial assessment of students prior to entering Western and then a series of follow-ups at different points in their academic careers. The purpose of this study is threefold: (1) To assess student needs based on their self-reported characteristics, perceptions and concerns; (2) To provide data that can be used to better assess academic and co-curricular programs by providing baseline entry data that can be used as statistical controls in analyses to offset the inability to conduct randomized studies; and (3) To maintain an ongoing record of student knowledge acquisition, ability levels, and other general education outcomes to address concerns of accountability and accreditation.

The WELS is conducted by the Office of Survey Research (OSR) and uses a mixture of on-line and telephone survey methodologies. Since the data collected in these studies includes identifying information, these data can and are linked with data in student records, thus expanding their usefulness beyond what could be obtained using large national studies such as the National Study of Student Engagement (NSSE). Although WELS data cannot, like other national studies, be used for comparisons to other institutions, the surveys have more flexibility in content to allow them to be tailored to Western's needs.

WELS 2003 COHORT

The first WELS was administered in the summer, 2003, and included only in-coming freshmen (no transfers)¹. The baseline survey was developed as a result of meetings with various stakeholders across campus (the Provost's Office, student services, deans, the faculty senate, ATUS, etc.) as well as focus groups with students and a search for potentially useful items used on various national surveys. This baseline included 1580 out of 2225 incoming first year non-transfer students (a response rate of 71%). This cohort was then followed up at the end of their first quarter (fall, 2003: 42% response rate), the end of their first year (spring, 2004: 55% response rate), and the end of their second year (spring 2005: 70% response rate), and at the end of their third year (spring, 2006: 50% response rate). Each follow-up survey is designed to address pressing concerns about student needs, programming, and accountability and accreditation standards pertinent to the students' year in college. (For example, the first quarter follow-up of the 2003 cohort was focused on how well students make the adjustment to college; and the first and second year follow-ups focused on GURs; and the third year follow-up focused on majors.)

WELS 2005 COHORTS

A second series of WELS baseline surveys was initiated in the summer, 2005, and again included all in-coming freshmen, although this time a separate baseline survey was developed for transfer students as well. The baseline for the 2005 survey of freshmen included 1691 out of 2386 incoming students (a response rate of 71%). The baseline for the 2005 survey of transfers included 875 out of 1029 entering transfer students (a response rate of 85%). Please see below for the list of reports on these two cohorts.

CURRENT SURVEY

This report presents findings from the spring, 2007, four-year follow-up survey of students who had entered as freshmen in fall, 2003. There were 851 completed surveys out of the 1547 fall, 2003, students still registered (a response rate of 55%). Given that the sample consisted of students who were in their

¹Current definitions of the term "freshmen" include nowadays a small percentage of students who do not fit the traditional profile of a freshman. These include high school students who have earned Running Start and Advanced Placement (AP) credits. Technically, these students are entering college for the first-time, but may have earned as many as 90 college credits.

fourth year of study and expected to have made a decision about their major field of study, one focus of this survey was on the process of declaring and changing majors, double majors, and minors. This survey also included a lengthy section on writing—students' writing experiences in general and in their writing proficiency courses. The cohort was also asked about their experiences in upper division courses and in their chosen academic departments. These students were asked about their experiences with or attitudes toward study abroad opportunities. In addition, questions from previous baseline and follow-up surveys were included on their use of and satisfaction with student services (including academic advising and tutorial services); attitudes toward the culture at Western; academic skills and competencies; academic and social engagement; academic and personal difficulties; and work experiences.

To find out more about previous surveys of the 2003 freshmen WELS cohort, see the following reports:

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (Report No. 2003-02).

Western Educational Longitudinal Study: Fall 2003 Freshmen Transition Survey. Focus: A Research Summary, 8, (4), 1-8.

Western Educational Longitudinal Study: Spring, 2004, Follow-up of Freshmen Entering Fall, 2003 (Report No. 2004-01).

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS): Spring, 2005, Follow-up of Freshmen Entering Fall, 2003 (Report No. 2006-01).

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS): Spring, 2006, Follow-up of Freshmen Entering Fall, 2003 (Report No. 2008-01).

To find out more about previous surveys of the 2005 freshmen and transfer WELS cohorts see the following reports:

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) Fall, 2005, Baseline Survey of In-coming Transfers (Report No. 2006-02).

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS): Fall, 2005, Baseline Survey of In-coming Freshmen (Report No. 2006-03).

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) Freshmen in Transition: Fall Quarter, 2005, In-coming Freshmen Surveyed at the End of Fall Quarter, 2005 (Report 2006-04).

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) Transfers in Transition: Fall Quarter, 2005, In-coming Transfers Surveyed at the End of Fall Quarter, 2005 (Report 2006-05).

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) Spring, 2006, Follow-up Survey of Students Who Had Entered as Freshmen in the Fall, 2005 (Report 2008-02).

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) Spring, 2006, Follow-up Survey of Students Who Had Entered as Transfers in the Fall, 2005 (Report 2008-03).

DECLARING AND CHANGING MAJORS

Have you officially declared any major or changed your major since the beginning of the academic year beginning fall, 2006? (N=851)

No	Declared 1st Major	Changed Major	Declared 2nd Major
70%	21%	6%	3%

Declared First Major (N=179)

Reason for delaying declaration. For those who declared majors for the first time: to what extent was each of the following a reason for not having officially declared your major prior to this time?

	N	Not at all	A minor reason	A major reason
Personal Reasons:				
Not sure about what major to declare.	178	37%	22%	41%
Needed to take more courses to qualify.	178	47%	28%	25%
Didn't know how to officially declare.	179	64%	30%	7%
Departmental Reasons:				
Too hard to get into courses needed to qualify.	178	62%	24%	14%
Difficulty meeting grade requirements for admission to the major.	179	79%	11%	10%
Missed deadline for declaring in my major field this year	177	90%	8%	2%

DECLARING AND CHANGING MAJORS (cont.)

Changed major (N=49)

Reason for changing major: For those who changed their majors: How important were each of the following as reasons for your decision to change your major?

	N	Not at all important	A little important	Somewhat important	Very important	Extremely important
Changed my interests.	49	12%	16%	18%	20%	33%
Later career or employment prospects were not good enough.	49	33%	22%	35%	8%	2%
Material was too difficult to master.	48	52%	15%	21%	6%	6%
Too hard to get into required courses.	49	49%	16%	20%	10%	4%
Would have taken too long to complete.	49	55%	2%	14%	18%	10%
Professors were unfriendly, unfair, or unprofessional.	47	62%	17%	11%	2%	9%
The departmental deadline for declaring my major of interest made it too difficult to continue in this area without delaying time to graduation.	49	78%	6%	10%	6%	0%

DECLARING AND CHANGING MAJORS (cont.)

Declared Second Major (N=20)

Which of the following were reasons for completing a second major? (Check all that apply.)

The second major will complement my first major.	52%
Had most of the necessary credits through electives.	38%
Just wanted to explore another field in more depth.	38%
There was a lot of overlap in requirements with my first major.	33%
Wanted a backup major in case my career plan didn't work out.	14%
Other*	24%

*Other responses included: decided on career in second major but too far into the first to give up, likes learning, and needed more credits to take CPA exam.

Does/ did pursuing a second degree increase the total number of credits required for your degree?

N	Yes	No
20	80%	20%

Approximately how many additional credits are/were required in order to complete this second major?
(N=16)

1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
0%	0%	25%	19%	56%

Does/ did pursuing a second major increase the amount of time needed to complete your degree?

N	Same time	More time
20	45%	55%

CURRENT MAJOR

How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of your experiences in your current major (or major field of study)? If more than one major, please refer to the major you officially declared first. (N=803)

	N	Not at all	A little	Some-what	Mostly	Very
Course availability	797	8%	10%	19%	40%	23%
Department internships and service learning opportunities	701	12%	15%	21%	27%	25%
Opportunities for independent study and research	660	9%	14%	25%	25%	27%
Opportunities for involvement in faculty research	624	14%	17%	25%	25%	19%
Adequacy of lab or studio space and equipment	590	9%	11%	21%	35%	24%
Adequacy of technology and available software	656	6%	7%	16%	36%	34%
Library resources in field	679	5%	8%	19%	37%	31%

MINOR

	Yes	No
Will/did you successfully complete a minor for graduation? (N=851)	47%	53%

Will Complete A Minor For Graduation (N=363)

	Yes	No
Does/Did pursuing a minor increase the amount of time at WWU needed to complete your degree?	25%	75%
Does/Did pursuing a minor increase your total number of credits needed for graduation?	51%	49%

Approximately how many additional credits are/were required in order to complete this minor? (N=185)

	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	> 20
	4%	19%	12%	24%	39%

MINOR (cont.)

Will NOT Complete A Minor For Graduation (N=448)

Did you ever consider completing a minor? (N=448)

Yes	No
71%	29%

Which of the following were reasons for not completing a minor in this field? (N=318)

Too many credits required	33%
Too difficult to get into upper division classes in the area	21%
Was discouraged by an advisor	3%
Was discouraged by department	7%
Course requirements were too difficult	13%
Other*	52%
*Couldn't complete minor without delaying graduation.	15%
*Scheduling conflicts, lack of course availability or access	8%
*Credits required for GURs/ major/ double major did not leave time for a minor	6%
*Changed interests and /or not enough interest	6%
*Decided to declare this as my major/2nd major	4%
*Disliked course content or faculty	3%
*Not offered as a minor	3%
*Not necessary or not worth it	2%
*Could not afford extra credits	1%
*Poor Advising	1%

*Other reasons: included in Fairhaven concentration; lack of focus; studied abroad; completed Woodring endorsement instead; decided to wait until post-bac.

EDUCATION PLANS

Do you plan to pursue an advanced educational degree any time in the foreseeable future? (N=757. Online version only.)

Yes: next year	10%
Yes: sometime in the next 5 years	49%
Yes: but not within the next 5 years	4%
No	14%
Uncertain	23%

EMPLOYMENT

Are you currently employed?	N	Yes	No
	851	65%	35%

Employed

How many hours per week do you typically work? (N=548)

	1-10 hrs	11-20 hrs	21-30 hrs	31-40 hrs	> 40 hrs
	18%	47%	22%	10%	3%

Do you plan to stay in this job for at least a year after you graduate? (N=549)

Yes	No
20%	80%

Students who do not have a job or do not plan to keep their job

Have you started to search for a job after graduation? (N=741.)

Yes	35%
No: I intend to look in the near future	41%
No: I plan to take some time off before looking for a job	12%
No: not interested in getting one	5%
I have already landed a position	7%

To what extent have you used the Career Center and events organized by the Career Center (e.g., Career Fairs, job bullet boards, etc.) at Western to help in your job search? (N=267)

Not at all	Very little	Some	A good deal	A lot
34%	29%	23%	9%	4%

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS):
Spring, 2007, Survey of Students Who Entered as Freshmen in Fall, 2003

WWU GRADUATION AND SATISFACTION

When do you anticipate graduating from WWU with your Bachelor's Degree? (N=850)

Already graduated	4%
Spring 2007	39%
Summer 2007	12%
Fall 2007	13%
Winter 2008	11%
Spring 2008 or later	19%
Uncertain	1%

To what extent would you say that your education at Western has helped you in the following ways?
(Online version only.)

	N	N/A	Not at all	Very little	Some	A good deal	A lot
Preparation for graduate study	756	54	5%	9%	31%	39%	16%
Understanding of current issues	756	7	1%	7%	28%	38%	26%
Ability to make good decisions in practical situations	754	11	2%	4%	22%	43%	30%
Preparation for life in general	756	4	2%	8%	27%	38%	25%
Ability to meet the challenges of being a professional in your field of study	754	5	2%	8%	28%	36%	26%

WWU GRADUATION AND SATISFACTION (cont.)

To what extent would you say each of the following is true about your time at Western?

	N	Not at all true	A little true	Somewhat true	Very true	Extremely true
I have made sound educational decisions.	791	2%	7%	27%	46%	18%
I have a good idea of how the different aspects of my education at Western have fit together.	790	3%	9%	35%	41%	13%
I have become a more engaged and independent learner.	790	4%	7%	25%	45%	20%
I have developed good problem solving and self-management skills.	790	3%	8%	25%	46%	18%
I feel like I have been in control of my own educational career and outcomes.	747	4%	9%	24%	40%	24%
I feel like the major I chose was the best for me.	745	3%	7%	20%	32%	37%
I have a better sense of my own abilities and skills.	747	3%	6%	24%	45%	23%
I have developed a better awareness of my own values and interests.	747	3%	5%	20%	42%	29%

***SERVICE LEARNING**

While attending Western, did you participate in any internship, service learning courses, volunteer positions, or other type of experience that gave you work experience in your field? (N=851)

Yes	No
56%	44%

Participated in internship, service learning or volunteer position

Please check all types of such experiences you have had while at Western. (N=470)

Volunteering	62%
Internships	58%
Service Learning	37%
Other (Please Specify:*	18%
*On or off campus job	4%
*Research	2%
*Practica	2%
*Independent study	2%
*Theatre Performances	1%
*Tutoring	1%
*Field Experience	1%
*Study Abroad	1%

*Other responses included: teaching assistanship; APICS Officer; AUAP; class relating to future field; club officer; international peer advisor; Junior Achievement through Econ 447; observing a minimum of 25 hours of clinic sessions; paid student government; professional conferences; senior project; Summer Stock Scholarship.

How helpful have these experiences been in terms of preparing you to get a job once you graduate? (N=463)

Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
3%	10%	22%	29%	37%

COURSE EXPERIENCE

First, how many of each type of assignment listed below have you completed as part of your coursework this past academic year, excluding those you completed to meet your writing proficiency requirement.

	N	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six or more
Required presentations involving the use of media (e.g. overheads, powerpoint, slides, etc.)	849	10%	12%	16%	16%	10%	8%	28%
Substantial essays of five pages or more	849	14%	12%	13%	13%	10%	12%	27%
Library research papers of 5 pages or more	845	24%	17%	19%	14%	9%	5%	11%
Scientific or primary source research papers of 5 pages or more	840	41%	18%	15%	10%	6%	5%	6%
* Service learning, internship or field projects	844	47%	23%	12%	7%	3%	2%	6%

How often this past year did you do each of the following? (Online version only.)

	N	Not at all	Once or twice	Several times	Often	Very often
Talk to a professor outside of class.	800	1%	18%	32%	20%	28%
Attend learning events (such as the distinguished lecture series) or cultural events (such as plays or concerts at the PAC) on campus.	801	23%	32%	26%	9%	9%
Work with a professor outside of class on a research project.	799	54%	22%	12%	6%	5%

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Have you taken a "capstone" course or seminar or completed a senior thesis or senior project as part of your major? (N=851)

Yes	No
41%	59%

Completed Capstone Course/Seminar or Senior Thesis/Project (N=332)

Did this course result in the production of a portfolio, major paper or artistic work that you could use as an example of your preparation for employment or graduate school?

Yes	No
70%	30%

To what extent would you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about your capstone or senior thesis/project course?

	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree somewhat	Disagree a little	Neither/ don't know	Agree a little	Agree somewhat	Strongly agree
It was a rewarding experience.	333	4%	5%	6%	4%	21%	28%	32%
It provided me with an opportunity to pull together much of what I had learned from other courses in my major.	333	6%	5%	9%	6%	22%	24%	29%
It gave me a feeling of competency.	333	6%	4%	5%	9%	20%	28%	29%
It left me feeling like I had learned a lot from the courses in my major	333	7%	6%	7%	9%	18%	27%	26%
It gave me a feeling of completion.	332	7%	5%	8%	9%	21%	23%	27%

WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSE EXPERIENCES

When did you successfully complete your WP course requirement? (N=851)

Fall 2003 - Summer 2004	8%
Fall 2004 - Summer 2005	6%
Fall 2005 - Summer 2006	16%
Fall 2006	16%
Winter 2007	20%
Spring 2007	13%
I haven't completed it yet	22%

COMPLETED WRITING PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT

How did you complete your Writing Proficiency? (N=668)

A single writing proficiency designated course	84%
A series of courses with writing proficiency points attached	11%
A petition to count a regular course as a writing proficiency	1%
Other (Please Specify):*	5%
*Multiple writing proficiency designated courses	2%
*Fairhaven writing portfolio	1%
*AP or transfer credit	1%

*Other responses (< 1%) included: waiver, Chemistry dept class that is one credit that you can tie to a regular class & write a paper about research, History 499, French language, correspondence course.

Completed Writing Proficiency Requirement: Series

For those who took a series of courses: How many courses and quarters did it take to complete your writing proficiency requirement?

	N	One	Two	Three	Four+
Courses	64	0%	52%	38%	11%
Quarters	64	23%	44%	27%	6%

COMPLETED WRITING PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT (Cont.)

Completed Writing Proficiency Requirement: Single Course

Why did you take your WP course when you did? (Check all that apply.) (N=504. Online version only.)

It was part of my major so I took it when prerequisites were completed.	66%
I wanted to get it taken care of as soon as possible.	23%
I wanted to get all my GURs out of the way first.	15%
It was difficult finding a WP course that fit into my schedule.	9%
I wanted to complete more upper division courses in my major first.	8%
I tried to get into a WP course earlier, but it was full.	8%
I put it off until I felt that I was ready.	8%
Preferred course or instructor, interesting class	6%
Scheduling requirements	3%
Required by department, or part of capstone course	2%
Did not realize it was WP until later	2%
Other (Please Specify):*	2%

*Other reasons included: was indecisive; not at that step yet; no clue; love science=hate writing; under the impression that WP and CF courses were the same, otherwise would have taken earlier; took a year away from school; confused, thought first WP points class fulfilled requirement; just wanted to be a better writer; chose to do it through iLearn so I could work at my own pace; large number of my cohort was taking it that quarter.

Did you have to repeat a WP course in order to complete the requirement?

N	Yes	No
506	3%	97%

Did you take other WP courses even though you had already completed the WP requirement?

N	Yes	No
507	37%	63%

COMPLETED WRITING PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT (Cont.)

Did the writing proficiency course you took also satisfy another requirement of your major? If so, what type of major requirement did it also satisfy? (N=563)

Yes: A core course requirement	44%
No: (see next table)	23%
Yes: An area or distribution requirement	10%
Yes: A capstone requirement	9%
Yes: Not Specified	7%
Yes: A senior thesis or project requirement	4%
Yes: Other (Please Specify)*	5%
*Yes: Elective	2%
*Yes: Upper division credit	1%

*Other responses included: senior seminar, internship requirement, honors research.

WP Course Did Not Satisfy Another Major Requirement: Single Course

Was this course another course in your major field or a course outside your major field? (N=129)

A course in my major	50%
A course outside my major (see next 2 tables)	40%
A course outside my major but specifically required by it	4%
Other (Please Specify):*	5%
*A course in my minor	2%

*Other responses included: Fairhaven concentration requirements; anthropology class called "Economic Anthropology" and I'm an economics major; general studies.

COMPLETED WRITING PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT (Cont.)

Responded "a course outside my major": Which of the following are reasons for completing your WP requirement outside your major? (N=45)

	N	%
I didn't think it made any difference.	15	35%
I completed it before changing my major or major interest.	11	26%
My major didn't offer a WP course during the quarter that I needed to take it.	7	16%
I thought it would be easier to complete outside my major.	5	12%
There was no specific course available designed for general studies majors.	3	7%
I didn't want to affect my GPA in my major.	0	0%
Other (Please Specify:*	6	14%

*Other responses included: it sounded fun and interesting; a course for my minor; took one in my major but it ended up not counting and I had to take another; too difficult to get into WP courses in my major.

Responded "a course outside my major": To what extent would you say that taking your writing proficiency outside your major field made it:

	N	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	A lot	Extremely
Less relevant?	45	56%	24%	13%	4%	2%
More difficult?	45	78%	13%	9%	0%	0%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

Below is a list of typical writing assignments and exams found in writing proficiency course(s). Thinking back to all the courses you took to satisfy your writing proficiency, if you took a series of courses, please indicate how many of those courses required at least one such element that was graded at least partially on your demonstrated writing skills, or, if you took a single WP designated course, please indicate "Yes" if this course required at least one such element and it was graded at least partially on your demonstrated writing skills.

Took series of courses for WP requirement

	N	None	One	Two	Three	Four
Short essays, take-home essay exams or papers (5 pages or less)	65	23%	8%	35%	11%	23%
Moderate-length essays, take-home essay exams or papers (6-10 Pages)	65	15%	17%	28%	20%	20%
Major essays, take-home essay exams or papers (more than 10 pages)	65	28%	22%	23%	11%	17%
In-class writing exercises	65	38%	18%	15%	8%	20%
In-class essay exams	65	40%	12%	20%	14%	14%
Other	65	86%	8%	2%	2%	3%

Took single WP designated course

	N	No	Yes
Short Essays, Take-Home Essay Exams or Papers (5 Pages or Less)	507	29%	71%
Moderate Length Essays, Take-Home Essay Exams or Papers (6-10 Pages)	507	44%	56%
Major Essays, Take-Home Essay Exams or Papers (More than 10 Pages)	507	49%	51%
In-Class Writing Exercises	507	52%	48%
In-Class Essay Exams	507	69%	31%
Other	507	72%	28%

Combined single and series

	N	No	Yes
Short Essays, Take-Home Essay Exams or Papers (5 Pages or Less)	572	29%	71%
Moderate Length Essays, Take-Home Essay Exams or Papers (6-10 Pages)	572	41%	59%
Major Essays, Take-Home Essay Exams or Papers (More than 10 Pages)	572	46%	54%
In-Class Writing Exercises	572	50%	50%
In-Class Essay Exams	572	66%	34%
Other	572	73%	27%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: FORMS OF INSTRUCTION

If the course(s) you took to fulfill your writing proficiency included any of the following forms of instruction, please change the default selection—"Not part of my WP course(s)"— to indicate how helpful you found that type of instruction in writing to be.

<i>Series of courses</i>	N	Not part of WP course	Not at all helpful	A Little helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	Extremely helpful
Formal lectures on writing from the instructor.	72	34	3%	26%	42%	18%	11%
In-class presentations or workshops offered by the Writing Center.	72	59	38%	31%	8%	23%	0%
Personal assistance of a writing assistant from the Writing Center.	72	61	36%	36%	27%	0%	0%
Personal assistance in writing from a department teaching assistant.	72	55	24%	24%	12%	41%	0%
Assigned readings on writing style and technique.	72	41	13%	39%	26%	16%	6%
Personal assistance in writing from your instructor.	72	27	4%	13%	24%	36%	22%
Peer feedback on your writing.	72	21	10%	20%	31%	27%	12%
Required re-writes of assignments, essays, or papers.	72	19	4%	21%	25%	34%	17%

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS):
Spring, 2007, Survey of Students Who Entered as Freshmen in Fall, 2003

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: FORMS OF INSTRUCTION (Cont.)

<i>Single WP course</i>	N	Not part of WP course	Not at all helpful	A Little helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	Extremely helpful
Formal lectures on writing from the instructor.	562	241	11%	29%	30%	22%	8%
In-class presentations or workshops offered by the Writing Center.	562	432	25%	30%	25%	15%	5%
Personal assistance of a writing assistant from the Writing Center.	562	455	21%	30%	26%	17%	6%
Personal assistance in writing from a department teaching assistant.	562	472	18%	22%	36%	21%	3%
Assigned readings on writing style and technique.	562	321	15%	30%	32%	20%	5%
Personal assistance in writing from your instructor.	562	195	3%	19%	26%	33%	19%
Peer feedback on your writing.	562	181	5%	20%	34%	30%	10%
Required re-writes of assignments, essays, or papers.	562	155	4%	14%	26%	37%	19%
<i>Combined Single and Series</i>	N	Not part of WP course	Not at all helpful	A Little helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	Extremely helpful
Formal lectures on writing from the instructor.	634	275	10%	29%	31%	21%	8%
In-class presentations or workshops offered by the Writing Center.	634	491	26%	30%	24%	16%	4%
Personal assistance of a writing assistant from the Writing Center.	634	516	22%	31%	26%	15%	5%
Personal assistance in writing from a department teaching assistant.	634	527	19%	22%	32%	24%	3%
Assigned readings on writing style and technique.	634	362	14%	31%	31%	19%	5%
Personal assistance in writing from your instructor.	634	222	3%	18%	25%	33%	19%
Peer feedback on your writing.	634	202	6%	20%	34%	30%	11%
Required re-writes of assignments, essays, or papers.	634	174	4%	15%	25%	37%	19%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: WRITING SKILLS

In the first response column, please indicate the extent to which course(s) you took to fulfill your writing proficiency provided instruction and assistance in developing skills in each area of writing.

Took series of courses for WP requirement

	N	Not at all	A little	Some	A lot
Using disciplinary style for citing and formatting of documentary sources (e.g., APA, ASA, MLA, etc.).	69	7%	14%	23%	55%
Using evidence to support ideas.	70	9%	13%	24%	54%
Developing a topic or thesis.	69	7%	22%	25%	46%
Organization of ideas.	70	10%	30%	29%	31%
Using grammatical conventions.	70	17%	17%	37%	29%
Choosing the best words to convey ideas.	69	17%	22%	33%	28%
Developing a sense of audience and purpose.	70	11%	21%	41%	26%
Using strategies for preparation and pre-writing.	68	19%	28%	28%	25%

Took single WP designated course.

	N	Not at all	A little	Some	A lot
Using evidence to support ideas.	529	10%	19%	30%	41%
Using disciplinary style for citing and formatting of documentary sources (e.g., APA, ASA, MLA, etc.).	530	17%	18%	28%	37%
Developing a topic or thesis.	529	13%	20%	35%	33%
Organization of ideas.	521	11%	22%	37%	31%
Using grammatical conventions.	531	15%	26%	31%	27%
Choosing the best words to convey ideas.	527	16%	24%	36%	23%
Developing a sense of audience and purpose.	534	13%	26%	39%	23%
Using strategies for preparation and pre-writing.	525	18%	29%	31%	22%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: WRITING SKILLS (Cont.)

Combined Single and Series

	N	Not at all	A little	Some	A lot
Using evidence to support ideas.	597	10%	18%	30%	43%
Using disciplinary style for citing and formatting of documentary sources (e.g., APA, ASA, MLA, etc.).	598	16%	18%	27%	39%
Developing a topic or thesis.	599	12%	20%	33%	34%
Organization of ideas.	590	11%	23%	36%	31%
Using grammatical conventions.	601	15%	25%	32%	28%
Choosing the best words to convey ideas.	597	16%	24%	36%	24%
Developing a sense of audience and purpose.	603	13%	25%	39%	23%
Using strategies for preparation and pre-writing.	595	18%	28%	31%	22%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: EFFECTIVENESS

Please rate the effectiveness of your WP course in each of the areas listed.

Took series of courses for WP requirement

	N	Don't know	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
Improving your overall writing skills	64	1	10%	14%	41%	18%	18%
Improving your ability to write effectively in your major field of study	64	2	8%	10%	31%	23%	29%
Preparing you to do well on writing assignments in other courses	64	1	6%	18%	32%	25%	19%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: EFFECTIVENESS (Cont.)

Took single WP designated course.

	N	Don't know	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
Improving your overall writing skills	481	2	14%	22%	33%	22%	9%
Improving your ability to write effectively in your major field of study	482	3	12%	17%	25%	27%	19%
Preparing you to do well on writing assignments in other courses	480	6	18%	15%	33%	23%	12%

Combined single and series

	N	Don't know	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
Improving your overall writing skills	545	3	14%	21%	34%	22%	10%
Improving your ability to write effectively in your major field of study	546	5	11%	16%	26%	26%	20%
Preparing you to do well on writing assignments in other courses	544	7	16%	16%	32%	23%	13%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: PORTFOLIO

Did you have to produce a portfolio of writing samples as part of your writing proficiency requirement?

	N	Yes	No
Series of courses for WP requirement	72	22%	78%
Single WP course/waiver	563	22%	78%
Combined Single and Series	627	22%	78%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: PORTFOLIO (Cont.)

To what extent do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about writing portfolios?

Series of courses for WP requirement

	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree somewhat	Disagree a little	Neither/Don't know	Agree a little	Agree somewhat	Strongly agree
They are useful to have when you are preparing to go on the job market or apply to graduate school.	16	6%	6%	13%	0%	31%	13%	31%
They help you see more clearly how your writing improves over time.	16	0%	19%	13%	0%	38%	13%	19%
They are useful learning tools.	16	0%	13%	0%	13%	44%	19%	13%
They help you understand better what it takes to be a good writer.	16	6%	25%	0%	0%	50%	13%	6%
They are waste of time.	16	25%	19%	25%	0%	19%	13%	0%

Single WP course

	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree somewhat	Disagree a little	Neither/Don't know	Agree a little	Agree somewhat	Strongly agree
They are useful to have when you are preparing to go on the job market or apply to graduate school.	119	8%	7%	6%	25%	23%	14%	17%
They help you see more clearly how your writing improves over time.	118	5%	9%	11%	10%	30%	23%	12%
They help you understand better what it takes to be a good writer.	119	8%	8%	15%	18%	28%	14%	9%
They are useful learning tools.	120	6%	5%	13%	16%	28%	24%	8%
They are waste of time.	118	21%	23%	10%	19%	17%	5%	5%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: PORTFOLIO (Cont.)

Combined Single and Series

	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree somewhat	Disagree a little	Neither/Don't know	Agree a little	Agree somewhat	Strongly agree
They are useful to have when you are preparing to go on the job market or apply to graduate school.	135	8%	7%	7%	22%	24%	14%	19%
They help you see more clearly how your writing improves over time.	134	4%	10%	11%	9%	31%	22%	13%
They help you understand better what it takes to be a good writer.	135	7%	10%	13%	16%	30%	14%	9%
They are useful learning tools.	136	5%	6%	12%	15%	30%	24%	8%
They are waste of time.	134	22%	22%	12%	16%	17%	6%	4%

DESIGNATED WRITING PROFICIENCY COURSES: COMPARED WITH OTHER COURSES

To what extent did your WP course help you develop or improve your writing skills beyond what you were able to do in other upper division courses not designated as writing proficiencies?

	N	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	A good deal	A lot
<i>Series of Courses</i>	72	11%	28%	31%	22%	8%
<i>Single WP course/waiver</i>	560	21%	37%	29%	14%	0%
<i>Combined Single and Series</i>	632	19%	36%	29%	15%	1%

NON-WP COURSES: FORMS OF INSTRUCTION

To what extent have you experienced each of the following forms of instruction in course(s) you took over the past two years that were NOT officially designed WP courses?

Series of courses for WP requirement

	N	Not at all	A little	Some	A lot
Peer feedback on your writing.	69	10%	35%	30%	25%
Required re-writes of assignments, essays, or papers.	69	23%	25%	25%	28%
Personal assistance in writing from your instructor.	69	28%	26%	25%	22%
Formal lectures on writing from the instructor	69	36%	29%	23%	12%
Assigned readings on writing style and technique.	69	43%	23%	25%	9%
Personal assistance in writing from a department teaching assistant	69	70%	19%	9%	3%
In-class presentations or workshops offered by the Writing Center	68	78%	12%	7%	3%
Personal assistance of a writing assistant from the Writing Center	68	84%	9%	6%	1%

Single WP course/waiver

	N	Not at all	A little	Some	A lot
Peer feedback on your writing.	542	17%	32%	33%	18%
Personal assistance in writing from your instructor.	537	24%	31%	28%	18%
Required re-writes of assignments, essays, or papers.	537	24%	28%	30%	18%
Formal lectures on writing from the instructor	542	26%	39%	22%	13%
Assigned readings on writing style and technique.	529	44%	32%	17%	7%
In-class presentations or workshops offered by the Writing Center	522	75%	17%	6%	1%
Personal assistance in writing from a department teaching assistant	524	77%	14%	7%	2%
Personal assistance of a writing assistant from the Writing Center	523	84%	10%	5%	2%

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS):
Spring, 2007, Survey of Students Who Entered as Freshmen in Fall, 2003

NON-WP COURSES: FORMS OF INSTRUCTION (Cont.)

Combined Single and Series

	N	Not at all	A little	Some	A lot
Peer feedback on your writing.	611	16%	32%	33%	19%
Required re-writes of assignments, essays, or papers.	606	24%	28%	30%	19%
Personal assistance in writing from your instructor.	606	24%	30%	28%	18%
Formal lectures on writing from the instructor	611	27%	38%	22%	13%
Assigned readings on writing style and technique.	598	44%	31%	18%	7%
In-class presentations or workshops offered by the Writing Center	591	76%	16%	6%	2%
Personal assistance in writing from a department teaching assistant	592	77%	15%	7%	2%
Personal assistance of a writing assistant from the Writing Center	591	84%	10%	5%	2%

NON-WP COURSES: WRITING SKILLS

Please indicate whether or not you took any courses over the past two years, other than those taken to satisfy the writing proficiency, that offered at least a similar level of instruction and assistance in the same aspect of writing.

<i>Series of Courses</i>				
	N	None at a similar level	Some at a similar level	Some at a greater level
Using disciplinary style for citing and formatting of documentary sources (e.g., APA, ASA, MLA, etc.).	69	22%	55%	23%
Using evidence to support ideas.	68	15%	69%	16%
Developing a topic or thesis.	68	24%	60%	16%
Developing a sense of audience and purpose.	69	23%	61%	16%
Using strategies for preparation and pre-writing.	68	28%	57%	15%
Using grammatical conventions.	69	32%	54%	14%
Organization of ideas.	68	24%	63%	13%
Choosing the best words to convey ideas.	69	30%	57%	13%
<i>Single WP course/waiver</i>				
	N	None at a similar level	Some at a similar level	Some at a greater level
Using disciplinary style for citing and formatting of documentary sources (e.g., APA, ASA, MLA, etc.).	497	16%	49%	35%
Using evidence to support ideas.	486	12%	54%	34%
Developing a topic or thesis.	492	14%	56%	30%
Organization of ideas.	490	16%	59%	25%
Using grammatical conventions.	492	25%	51%	24%
Developing a sense of audience and purpose.	497	18%	59%	24%
Choosing the best words to convey ideas.	489	26%	52%	22%
Using strategies for preparation and pre-writing.	490	29%	49%	22%

NON-WP COURSES: WRITING SKILLS (Cont.)

Combined Single and Series

	N	None at a similar level	Some at a similar level	Some at a greater level
Using disciplinary style for citing and formatting of documentary sources (e.g., APA, ASA, MLA, etc.).	566	16%	50%	34%
Using evidence to support ideas.	554	13%	56%	31%
Developing a topic or thesis.	560	16%	56%	28%
Organization of ideas.	559	17%	59%	24%
Using grammatical conventions.	560	26%	51%	23%
Developing a sense of audience and purpose.	566	18%	59%	23%
Using strategies for preparation and pre-writing.	557	29%	50%	21%
Choosing the best words to convey ideas.	559	27%	53%	21%

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Thinking back over the years you have been at Western, please indicate whether or not you have utilized any of the following services offered by the Academic Advising Center. (N=744)

Summerstart	76%
One-on-one professional advising	48%
Information via e-mail or printed brochures about choosing courses, majors, etc.	44%
One-on-one peer advising	20%
A special presentation to a regular academic class or FIGs seminar	15%
A special advising workshop offered at the Advising Center, in the residence halls, or elsewhere on campus	8%
A small group advising session	8%
A special course offered by the Academic Advising Center (UNIV107)	5%
Other*	6%
*Tutorial Center	1%
*Professors/mentors in major department	1%
*None—figured it out	1%

*"Other" reasons with < 1% response included: Friends/classmates, Advisor, Student Technology Center, WWU website, tutors, pre-med club, writing center, testing center, a professional using Myers Briggs & Strong tests, "what if analysis" on Web4U, resume, Office of Student Life (Student Outreach Services), Math Center, Kathy Johnson at Huxley, Karen Perry, GUR Evaluation, ESCI 101, Dr. Kriz in conjunction with DisAbility services, credit evaluations.

Over the years that you have been attending Western, how helpful have you found the services and information provided by the Academic Advising Center? (N=637. Online version only.)

N	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
637	19%	35%	33%	10%	3%

Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS):
Spring, 2007, Survey of Students Who Entered as Freshmen in Fall, 2003

ACADEMIC SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

	N	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
Writing effectively	839	2%	5%	26%	44%	24%
Speaking effectively	838	2%	7%	32%	41%	18%
Critically analyzing written information	837	1%	4%	27%	47%	20%
Defining and solving problems	837	0%	3%	25%	51%	21%
Working and/or learning independently	834	1%	2%	13%	48%	36%
Working cooperatively in a group	833	1%	4%	18%	49%	29%
Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods	836	4%	14%	36%	29%	17%
Understanding and applying quantitative principles and methods	836	6%	14%	34%	31%	15%
Planning, implementing and organizing research	835	2%	7%	29%	41%	20%
Using library resources for research	831	3%	11%	28%	37%	22%
Citing references for research papers, for example, creating a bibliography	833	2%	8%	21%	40%	30%
Understanding how to avoid plagiarism in your writing	834	1%	3%	14%	41%	40%
Understanding and appreciating differing philosophies/cultures	832	2%	4%	19%	37%	38%
Understanding the interaction of society and the environment	831	1%	5%	21%	42%	32%
Working effectively with technology, especially computers	834	1%	4%	22%	40%	33%
Using management/leadership capabilities	830	2%	6%	28%	39%	26%
Understanding organizations and how people behave in them	831	2%	6%	25%	42%	25%