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# Fall 2013 Survey of Non-Returning Students

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FALL 2013 SURVEY OF NON-RETURNING STUDENTS

Descriptive Statistics

Report 2014-01

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January, 2014  
OFFICE OF SURVEY RESEARCH  
WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



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## FALL 2013 SURVEY OF NON-RETURNING STUDENTS

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2013 Non-Returning Student Survey (NRS) is Western's first large-scale survey of students who dropped or stopped out since OIART conducted a Survey of Non-Returning Students in June, 2001. The goal of the NRS was to identify reasons for students' failure to continuously enroll, and to identify improvements Western could implement to aid at-risk students. The NRS was designed in conjunction with Western's Office of Institutional Research and Division of Enrollment and Student Services.

The sample for the NRS covers all undergraduate, degree-seeking students who were enrolled during fall, winter, or spring quarter between fall, 2011 and spring, 2013. From these, OSR removed all students who graduated, all post-baccalaureate students, and any student who was dropped from the university due to poor academic performance. From the remainder, OSR identified 2,333 students who failed enroll at Western during fall quarter, 2013. These 2,333 students are OSR's survey sample.

A unique feature of the NRS is that all students, not just those who complete OSR's surveys, can be tracked after leaving Western through the National Student Clearinghouse (Clearinghouse), a service that follows individual students as they enroll in nearly any U.S. 2- or 4-year institution of higher education. Section A.1 of this report provides information on Western's non-returning students gleaned from the Clearinghouse. Of the 2,333 students failing to return to Western, 1,329 (57%) were recorded by the Clearinghouse as attending at least one institution after leaving Western. Of these, just over one-half (52%, 690 students) attended a public, two-year university while 42% (561 students) attended a public, four-year university. All but one of the remainder (6%) attended a private, four-year school. The most common 2-year schools were Whatcom Community College (193 students), Bellevue (85), Everett (54), Skagit (40), Bellingham Tech (34) and Olympic College (34). The most common 4-year schools attended by former Western students were the University of Washington (86), Washington State University (64), Eastern Washington University (34), and Central Washington University (26).

Western has admission index measures for 1,729 of the 2,333 non-returning students in the sample. Thirty-five percent had an AI greater than 60 and nearly another 25% had AIs between 50 and 60. By the time of their withdrawal, nearly one-third of non-returning students earned cumulative WWU GPAs greater than 3.0. On the other hand, 19% of non-returning students earned cumulative WWU GPAs less than 2.0. Interestingly, 219 students left Western having already accumulated more than 180 credits, a group that perhaps, with a little effort, could be convinced to return to earn their degrees.

Using the Clearinghouse data, OSR can also identify the types of students that attend other institutions after leaving Western. Of the 2,333 non-returning students, 214 had either declared a major, pre-major, or had expressed interest in Physical Education, Health & Recreation, 172 in Psychology, 133 in Biology, 124 in Engineering Technology, and 106 in Elementary Education. It is important to note that many of these students may have simply expressed an interest in these subjects and had yet to declare a major in them. Among those who had actually declared a major, 81 students who failed to return to Western were in PEHR, 43 in English, 37 from Fairhaven, and 33 from Art.

Beginning on October 8, 2013 OSR sent e-mail invitations to the sample using the last known external e-mail address of these students. OSR also attempted to use internal e-mail addresses of students on the off chance that some students continued to use their Western accounts. Students failing to respond to e-mail solicitations were then called at their last known cell phone or permanent phone number. The survey concluded on November 22, 2013. OSR received survey responses from 946 students, a response rate of 40.5%. Of these 946, 212 responded to the survey over the telephone.

As with any survey, readers should be concerned with sample selection bias; that is bias that arises because respondents are often a non-random selection of the population of potential respondents. While sample selection bias is mitigated by proper survey techniques and a relatively high survey response rate, this is of special concern in a survey of individuals who have left Western because many have varying degrees of commitment to the university. For instance, 24% of respondents claim to be “Very likely” to return to Western to continue their education. Of course, it is exactly these type of students one would expect to respond to a survey e-mail or phone call.

To explore sample selection bias, section A.2 of this report lists a number of observable characteristics between respondents, non-respondents, and students who remained at Western. As usual in surveys, respondents were much more likely to be female (52.4% of respondents were female whereas 54.8% of all non-returning students were female). As mentioned in the introduction, this survey spanned two academic years (2011-2012 and 2012-2013). Students having attended in the most recent academic year were more likely to respond to the survey than those in the prior year. Fully 63% of the responses come from the most recent attendees whereas they make up 57% of the population. Respondents also tended to be slightly stronger academically with average AIs of 54.3 and average Western GPAs of 2.65 relative to the entire population which averaged AIs of 53.3 and Western GPAs of 2.53. At the same time, respondents and non-respondents had similar measures of accumulated credits, Running Start and transfer student status, racial profiles, and Washington State residency status.

Turning to the survey results, 91% of respondents originally enrolled at Western in hopes of earning a degree from Western. Nearly all of the remainder enrolled in hopes of transferring to another institution. Of those originally wishing to transfer, almost three-fourths had enrolled in their preferred institution. When asked about their current activity, nearly one-half of non-returning students had enrolled at another institution while 40% were working for pay.

As noted above, 24% of survey respondents indicated they were “very likely” to return to Western. As of the beginning of Winter quarter (2014), 142 respondents, or 6% of the non-returning students, had re-enrolled at Western.

Respondents were allowed to choose as many reasons as they liked to describe why they left Western. The three most common “broad” reasons given were finances, academics, and family/personal reasons. When asked to be more specific about financial reasons, nearly one-in-five students claimed their student loans were too large and about a similar amount stated that their or their family’s financial situation changed. About one-in-eight claimed not receiving financial aid contributed to their reason for leaving Western. Forty percent of respondents cited academic reasons for leaving Western. Of those, nearly one-third claimed to have academic problems at Western, about one-third believed another school has a better program in their field, and a similar number remained unsure about what they wanted to study. A smaller fraction of students left because Western did not offer an academic program of interest. The most common program mentioned, by 17 students, was nursing and 23 students have since enrolled in a nursing program.

The NRS concludes with two open ended questions asking students if there was “anything that could have been done to make your experience at Western more successful?” and “Is there anything else you would like us to know about your experiences at Western?” Of the 623 individuals who responded to the first of these questions, nearly one-half of them indicated that there was nothing Western could have done to make them more successful. Of the remainder, the most frequent (45) response was to provide better advising or access to advising, greater access to financial aid (39) and lower tuition (39).

The NRS data is linkable to other Western data sources by unique student identifier. OSR welcomes and encourages campus researchers to utilize this data in their further investigation of issues impacting student success.

## Clarifying Notes

1. Unless otherwise noted, percentages given are of the number responding to a question divided by the number asked that question. This denominator may contain fewer respondents than the 946 responding to the survey due to question branching, random selection of respondents for certain questions, and survey attrition.
2. In many cases percentages do not sum to one hundred because of rounding.
3. A blank space indicates no respondent chose that response option. A report of 0% indicates that the percent of responses rounded down to, but is not equal with, zero.
4. This report presents responses from all respondents completing any question regardless of whether the respondent completed the survey or not.

### THE OFFICE OF SURVEY RESEARCH

The Office of Survey Research provides high quality survey research and other applied social science research that supports the mission of Western Washington University. In particular, OSR surveys students, alumni, graduates, employers, and the campus community to provide valuable assessment data and analysis of reports which can be used for improvement of programs, instruction, faculty scholarship, and information services. OSR is responsible for developing and administering the Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS), Western's Alumni Surveys, and Western's exit surveys of graduating students.

<http://www.wvu.edu/socad/osr/>

## A.1. All Non-returning Students (Clearinghouse Data)

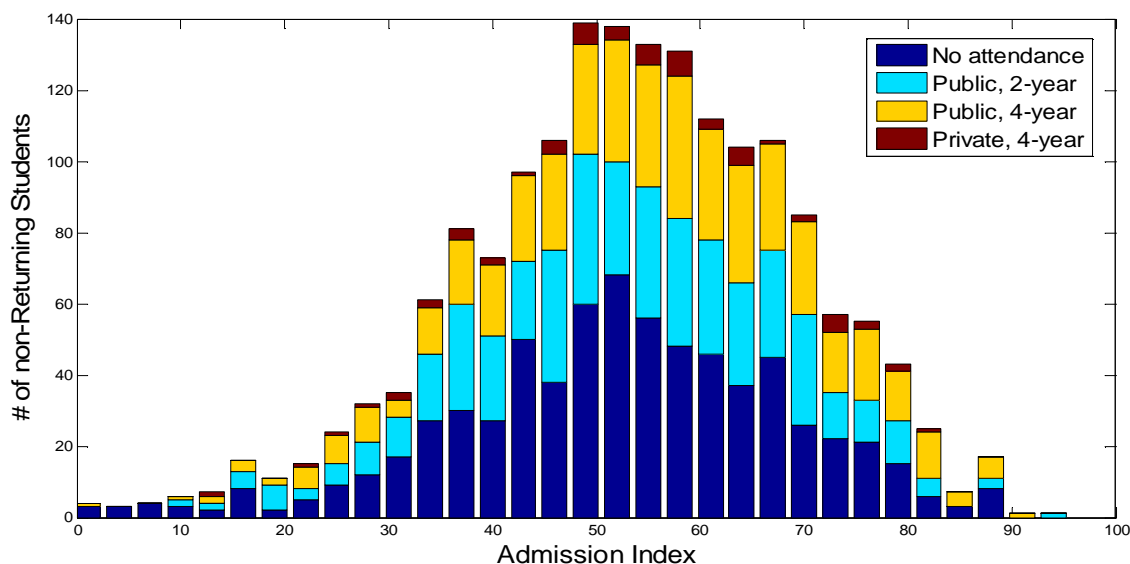
### A.1.a. School Attendance After Western (Clearinghouse Data)

|                                       | N     | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Did not attend a school after Western | 1,004 | 43%        |
| Attended another school after Western | 1,329 | 57%        |
| Total                                 | 2,333 | 100%       |

### A.1.b. College Type (Clearinghouse Data)

|                 | N     | Percentage |
|-----------------|-------|------------|
| Public, 2-year  | 690   | 52%        |
| Private, 2-year | 1     | 0%         |
| Public, 4-year  | 561   | 42%        |
| Private, 4-year | 77    | 6%         |
| Total           | 1,329 | 100%       |

### A.1.c. Attendance After Western, by Institution Type and Admissions Index (Clearinghouse Data)



### A.1.d. Attendance After Western, By Class (Clearinghouse Data)

| Class     | Public, 2 Yr | Private, 2 Yr | Public, 4 Yr | Private, 4 Yr | Did Not Attend | Total |
|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|-------|
| Freshmen  | 236          | 0             | 209          | 27            | 191            | 663   |
| Sophomore | 169          | 0             | 184          | 18            | 195            | 566   |
| Junior    | 215          | 1             | 131          | 24            | 241            | 612   |
| Senior    | 68           | 0             | 37           | 8             | 357            | 470   |
| Total     | 688          | 1             | 561          | 77            | 984            | 2,311 |

A.1.e. All Students Who Attended Other Schools After WWU (Clearinghouse Data)

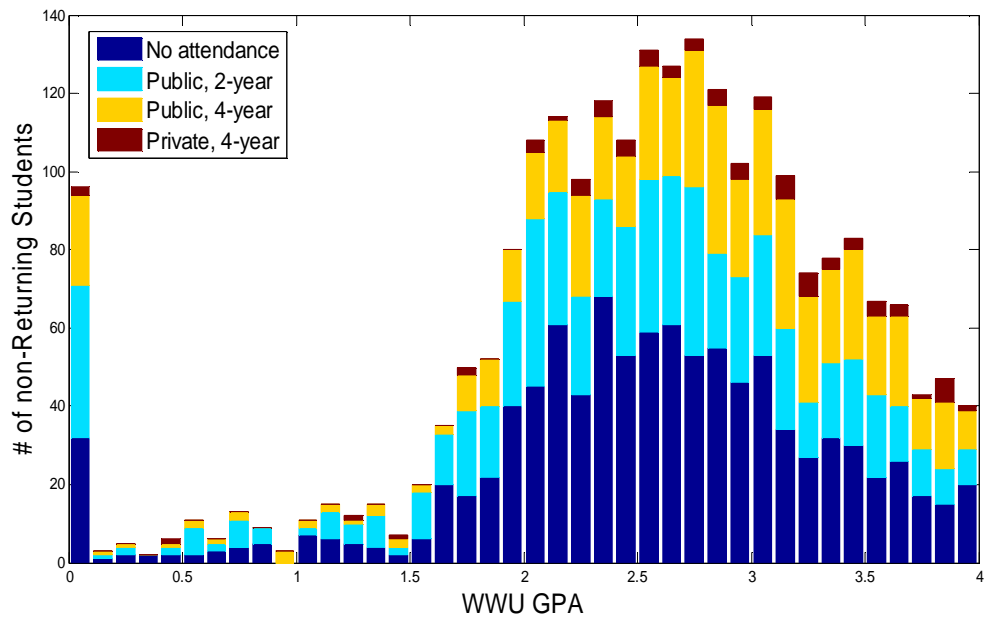
| College Name                        | Freq. | College Name                                  | Freq. |
|-------------------------------------|-------|---|-------|
| Whatcom Community College           | 193   | University of Alaska-Fairbanks                | 3     |
| University of Washington - Seattle  | 86    | University of Arizona                         | 3     |
| Bellevue College                    | 85    | University of Maryland                        | 3     |
| Washington State University         | 64    | University of Nevada-Reno                     | 3     |
| Everett Community College           | 54    | University of Wyoming                         | 3     |
| Skagit Valley College               | 40    | American University                           | 2     |
| Bellingham Technical College        | 34    | Austin Community College                      | 2     |
| Eastern Washington University       | 34    | Brigham Young University                      | 2     |
| Olympic College                     | 34    | Cabrillo College                              | 2     |
| Edmonds Community College           | 31    | Centralia College                             | 2     |
| Pierce College                      | 31    | College of Southern Nevada                    | 2     |
| Clark College                       | 29    | Columbus State Community College              | 2     |
| Central Washington University       | 26    | Fort Lewis College                            | 2     |
| Highline Community College          | 25    | Loyola Marymount University                   | 2     |
| The Evergreen State College         | 24    | Mt. Hood Community College                    | 2     |
| North Seattle Community College     | 23    | Musicians Institute                           | 2     |
| Cascadia Community College          | 22    | Northern Arizona University                   | 2     |
| Green River Community College       | 22    | Orange Coast College                          | 2     |
| Seattle Central Community College   | 22    | Palomar College                               | 2     |
| Peninsula College                   | 20    | Renton Technical College                      | 2     |
| Shoreline Community College         | 18    | Santa Rosa Junior College                     | 2     |
| South Puget Sound Community College | 16    | Simpson University                            | 2     |
| Tacoma Community College            | 16    | Southern New Hampshire                        | 2     |
| Spokane Falls Community College     | 15    | Tarrant County College                        | 2     |
| Wenatchee Valley College            | 13    | Truckee Meadows Community College             | 2     |
| University of Montana               | 10    | University of Alaska-Southeast                | 2     |
| Lower Columbia College              | 9     | University of Colorado-Denver                 | 2     |
| Boise State university              | 8     | University of Hawaii at Hilo                  | 2     |
| Colorado State University           | 8     | University of Idaho                           | 2     |
| Seattle Pacific University          | 8     | University of Nevada-Las Vegas                | 2     |
| Seattle University                  | 8     | University of Northern Colorado               | 2     |
| University of Oregon                | 8     | University of Wisconsin -Madison              | 2     |
| Grays Harbor College                | 7     | Walla Walla Community College                 | 2     |
| Montana State University - Bozeman  | 7     | Western State Colorado University             | 2     |
| Portland Community College          | 7     | Whitman College                               | 2     |
| Portland State University           | 7     | Whitworth University                          | 2     |
| Santa Barbara City College          | 7     | 117 schools were attended by one student each |       |



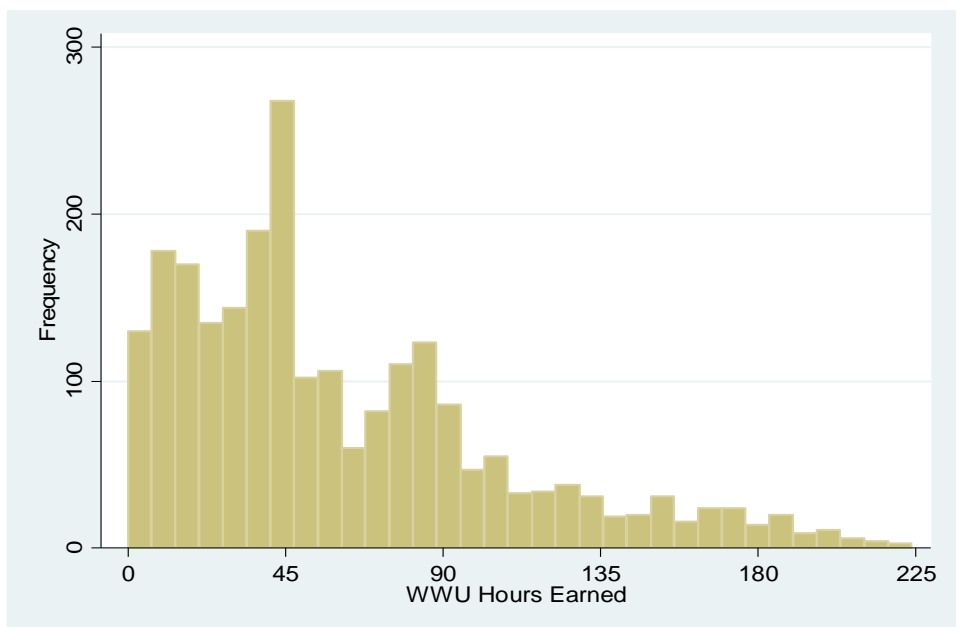
A.1.f. Majors listed by Non-Returning Students (Clearinghouse Data)

| Department                     | # of Majors, Pre-majors or Interest | # of Majors |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Accounting                     | 29                                  | 12          |
| American Cultural Studies      | 4                                   | 1           |
| Anthropology                   | 43                                  | 18          |
| Art                            | 91                                  | 33          |
| Biology                        | 133                                 | 27          |
| Canadian/American Studies      | 1                                   | 1           |
| Chemistry                      | 44                                  | 4           |
| College of Business & Econ     | 45                                  | 0           |
| Communication Sci & Disorders  | 13                                  | 2           |
| Communication Studies          | 51                                  | 7           |
| Computer Science               | 69                                  | 25          |
| Decision Sciences              | 13                                  | 2           |
| Design                         | 23                                  | 23          |
| East Asian Studies             | 3                                   | 1           |
| Economics                      | 25                                  | 19          |
| Elementary Education           | 106                                 | 10          |
| Engineering Technology         | 124                                 | 38          |
| English                        | 91                                  | 43          |
| Environmental Sciences         | 18                                  | 16          |
| Environmental Studies          | 94                                  | 30          |
| Extended Education             | 1                                   | 0           |
| Fairhaven College              | 83                                  | 37          |
| Finance & Marketing            | 62                                  | 14          |
| General Studies                | 40                                  | 35          |
| Geology                        | 33                                  | 28          |
| History                        | 43                                  | 29          |
| Human Srvcs and Rehabilitation | 31                                  | 19          |
| Journalism                     | 50                                  | 4           |
| Liberal Studies                | 10                                  | 3           |
| Linguistics                    | 16                                  | 7           |
| Management                     | 87                                  | 9           |
| Mathematics                    | 36                                  | 9           |
| Modern and Classical Languages | 24                                  | 8           |
| Music                          | 58                                  | 18          |
| Philosophy                     | 27                                  | 16          |
| Physical Ed, Health&Recreation | 214                                 | 81          |
| Physics and Astronomy          | 19                                  | 12          |
| Political Science              | 62                                  | 18          |
| Psychology                     | 172                                 | 20          |
| Science Education              | 3                                   | 1           |
| Secondary Education            | 55                                  | 0           |
| Sociology                      | 30                                  | 11          |
| Special Educ & Educ Leadership | 38                                  | 31          |
| Theatre Arts and Dance         | 46                                  | 22          |
| Undeclared                     | 9                                   | 0           |
| University                     | 63                                  | 0           |
| Women Studies                  | 1                                   | 0           |
| Total                          | 2,333                               | 744         |

A.1.g. Students Who left Western by GPA



A.1.h. Students Who left Western by Hours Earned



## A.2. Comparison of all Non-Returning Students and Respondents

### A.2.a. Comparisons

|   | Non- Respondents | Respondents | All Non-returning Students | Returning Students** |
|---|------------------|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| N                                       | 1,387            | 946         | 2,333                      | 10,049               |
| Male                                    | 47.6%            | 41.6%       | 45.2%                      | 45.4%                |
| Caucasian                               | 76.5%            | 77.7%       | 77.0%                      | 76.1%                |
| Black                                   | 3.0%             | 2.9%        | 3.0%                       | 3.2%                 |
| Hispanic                                | 5.6%             | 6.9%        | 6.1%                       | 6.1%                 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander                  | 8.9%             | 7.5%        | 8.4%                       | 10.7%                |
| Native American                         | 4.0%             | 3.3%        | 3.7%                       | 2.5%                 |
| Other/Unknown Race                      | 1.2%             | 1.4%        | 1.3%                       | 0.8%                 |
| International                           | 0.8%             | 0.4%        | 0.6%                       | 0.6%                 |
| First Generation Student                | 32.9%            | 32.2%       | 32.6%                      | 32.5%                |
| Runningstart Student                    | 10.9%            | 11.3%       | 11.1%                      | 11.5%                |
| Transfer Student                        | 31.8%            | 29.3%       | 30.8%                      | 26.4%                |
| WA Resident                             | 89.3%            | 88.9%       | 89.1%                      | 91.4%                |
| Freshmen                                | 27.9%            | 29.2%       | 28.4%                      | 14.0%                |
| Sophomore                               | 23.1%            | 26.0%       | 24.3%                      | 21.7%                |
| Junior                                  | 25.2%            | 27.8%       | 26.2%                      | 31.6%                |
| Senior                                  | 22.9%            | 16.2%       | 20.1%                      | 32.5%                |
| Most recently enrolled within 1 year    | 53.2%            | 63.0%       | 57.2%                      |                      |
| Most recently enrolled within 1-2 years | 46.8%            | 37.0%       | 42.8%                      |                      |
| Attended a school after Western         | 54.8%            | 60.1%       | 57.0%                      |                      |
| Mean Admission Index*                   | 52.6             | 54.3        | 53.3                       | 56.1                 |
| Mean Age                                | 23.4             | 23.3        | 23.4                       | 22.1                 |
| Median Age                              | 21.8             | 21.3        | 21.6                       | 21.3                 |
| Mean Cumulative WWU Credits             | 62.8             | 57.8        | 60.8                       | 86.6                 |
| Mean Cumulative Transfer Credits        | 36.5             | 35.6        | 36.1                       | 65.4                 |
| Mean WWU GPA                            | 2.44             | 2.65        | 2.53                       | 2.99                 |

\*As available

\*\* Enrolled in at least one quarter between 201240 and 201330 (inclusive), and also enrolled in more than zero credits in 201340

A.2.b. Last Quarter of Attendance

|              | All Non-Returning Students |            | All Respondents |            |
|--------------|----------------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
|              | Freq.                      | Percentage | Freq.           | Percentage |
| Fall, 2011   | 233                        | 10%        | 75              | 8%         |
| Winter, 2012 | 216                        | 9%         | 79              | 8%         |
| Spring, 2012 | 471                        | 20%        | 167             | 18%        |
| Summer, 2012 | 37                         | 2%         | 15              | 2%         |
| Fall, 2012   | 333                        | 14%        | 127             | 13%        |
| Winter, 2013 | 287                        | 12%        | 106             | 11%        |
| Spring, 2013 | 665                        | 29%        | 343             | 36%        |
| Summer, 2013 | 87                         | 4%         | 34              | 4%         |
| Total        | 2,329                      | 100%       | 946             | 100%       |

---

## B. Survey Responses

B.1. When you enrolled at Western, was your intent to:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| N  | 945 |
| Earn a degree from Western                                 | 91% |
| Transfer to another institution                            | 8%  |
| Take classes without earning a degree from any institution | 1%  |

---

B.1.a. Have you enrolled at the institution to which you intended to transfer? (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.1. that they intended to transfer when they enrolled at Western.)

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| N   | 73  |
| Yes | 71% |
| No  | 29% |

---

B.2. How likely is it that you will return to Western to continue your education?

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| N                 | 879 |
| Very unlikely     | 42% |
| Somewhat unlikely | 11% |
| Uncertain         | 14% |
| Somewhat likely   | 9%  |
| Very likely       | 24% |

---

B.3. What is currently your principal activity?

|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| N                                     | 879 |
| Paid employment                       | 39% |
| Student at another institution        | 45% |
| Military service                      | 1%  |
| Volunteer activity (e.g. Peace Corps) | 2%  |
| Starting or raising a family          | 2%  |
| Other, please specify below           | 12% |

---

B.3.a. Other current activities (Open-ended question asked of respondents who indicated "other" in B.3.) (Frequencies are reported.) (Text responses available on request.)

|   |    |
|---|----|
| N=105   |    |
| Personal or family health issues                | 15 |
| Unemployed and/or looking for employment        | 15 |
| Employment <i>and</i> student/or other activity | 14 |
| Internship                                      | 10 |
| Traveling/study abroad                          | 7  |
| Disability/disabled                             | 6  |
| Self-employed                                   | 4  |
| Retired   | 3  |
| Taking a break                                  | 2  |
| Other comments                                  | 28 |

B.4. Which of the following categories describe the most important reasons why you did not return to Western this fall?

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| N                                 | 879 |
| Finances                          | 40% |
| Academics                         | 40% |
| Western's environment or location | 24% |
| Family or personal                | 38% |
| Other                             | 14% |

---

B.4.a. Which financial reasons were important in your decision not to return to Western this fall? Check all that apply. (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.4. that an important reason why they did not return to Western this fall is because of finances.)

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| N   | 345 |
| I worried my student loans were too large     | 44% |
| My or my family's financial situation changed | 39% |
| Working for pay interfered with my studies    | 24% |
| I didn't receive work study funds             | 19% |
| I didn't receive financial aid                | 30% |
| I wasn't getting my money's worth at Western  | 20% |
| I had a career opportunity                    | 17% |
| Other   | 16% |

---

B.4.a.1. What is the other reason? (Open-ended question asked of respondents who indicated in B.4.a. that "other" financial reasons were important in their decision not to return to Western this fall.) (N=52) (Responses included: financial aid issues, trouble finding affordable housing, got scholarships somewhere else, cost of living in Bellingham too high, tuition is too expensive, saving up money.) (Text responses available on request.)

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B.4.b. Which academic reasons were important in your decision not to return to Western this fall? Check all that apply. (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.4. that an important reason why they did not return to Western this fall is because of academics.)

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| N  | 345 |
| I achieved my goals and felt no more need to attend          | 6%  |
| I wanted to complete GURs at another college                 | 12% |
| I had academic problems at Western                           | 34% |
| I was unsure of what I wanted to study                       | 35% |
| Another school had a better program in my field              | 34% |
| Another school has a better reputation                       | 15% |
| I didn't feel challenged by the courses I took at Western    | 12% |
| Western doesn't offer the major or program that interests me | 31% |
| It was too hard to get into the classes I needed             | 19% |
| Classes were too big   | 12% |
| Other  | 22% |

B.4.b.1. What is the other reason? (Open-ended question asked of respondents who indicated in B.4.a. that "other" academic reasons were important in their decision not to return to Western this fall.) (N= 71) (Responses included: Classes were too challenging, difficulty with transfer credits, difficulty applying to a program, not accepted into program, couldn't get guidance for major, mistreated by faculty, professors didn't provide support needed.) (Text responses available on request.)

B.4.b.2. What major or program are you interested in that Western did not offer? (Open-ended question asked of respondents who indicated in B.4.b that Western doesn't offer the major or program that interests me.) (Frequencies are reported.) (Text responses available on request.)

|  |    |
|--|----|
| N=102  |    |
| Nursing  | 17 |
| Filmmaking/acting/makeup/special effects           | 5  |
| Dietetics/nutrition                                | 4  |
| Chemical engineering                               | 3  |
| Hospitality business management/tourism            | 3  |
| Mechanical engineering                             | 3  |
| Radiology/radiation therapy                        | 3  |
| 11 programs were mentioned by two respondents each |    |
| 42 programs were mentioned by one respondent each  |    |

B.4.b.3. Why was it too hard to get the classes you needed? Check all that apply. (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.4.b. that difficulty getting into classes was a factor in their decision to leave Western).

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| N   | 61  |
| They were full                                  | 77% |
| They had prerequisites that I had not completed | 30% |
| They were at conflicting times                  | 41% |
| They were not taught by professors I wanted     | 10% |
| Online registration did not work well           | 21% |
| Other   | 23% |

B.4.c. Which environment or location reasons were important in your decision not to return to Western this fall? Check all that apply. (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.4. that an important reason why they did not return to Western this fall is because of Western's environment or location.)

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| N  | 210 |
| Western is too big   | 10% |
| Western is too small   | 13% |
| I disliked the weather, recreation opportunities, or location in general | 42% |
| I wanted to be closer to home  | 37% |
| I wanted to be further from home   | 7%  |
| There was a lack of diversity at Western                                 | 28% |
| I was treated poorly by Western's faculty and staff                      | 22% |
| Other  | 26% |

B.4.c.1. What is the other reason? (Open-ended question asked of respondents who indicated in B.4.c. that "other" environment or location reasons were important in their decision not to return to Western this fall.) (N= 50) (Responses included: Didn't get the support needed, didn't like the people, The people are not friendly, moved to different state, lack of community, dorm situation was poor, no work opportunities nearby, Western is too liberal.) (Text responses available on request.)

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B.4.d. Which family or personal reasons were important in your decision not to return to Western this fall? Check all that apply. (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.4 that an important reason why they did not return to Western this fall is because of family or personal reasons.)

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| N  | 328 |
| I lacked friends or social support at Western              | 27% |
| I wanted to be with friends or a significant other         | 24% |
| I had personal health reasons                              | 40% |
| I didn't fit in at Western                                 | 20% |
| I wanted to do something or go somewhere new and different | 29% |
| I wanted to serve in the military                          | 1%  |
| Other  | 32% |

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B.4.d.1. What is the other reason? (Open-ended question asked of respondents who indicated in B.4.d. that "other" family or personal reasons were important in their decision not to return to Western this fall.) (N=95) (Responses included: death in the family, family strife, had a baby, sick family member, depression, mental health, lack of motivation.) (Text responses available on request.)

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B.4.e. Which other reasons were important in your decision not to return to Western this fall? (Open-ended question asked of respondents who indicated in B.4. that "other" reasons were important in their decision not to return to Western this fall.) (N=93) (Responses included: dorm issues, living situation, morale was low and wanted to live elsewhere, internship opportunity, playing sports elsewhere, lack of support, no interest.) (Text responses available on request.)

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B.5. Since you left Western, have you attended another school?

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| N   | 495 |
| Yes | 19% |
| No  | 81% |



B.5.a. Are you still enrolled at a higher education institution? (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.5. that they have attended another institution since leaving Western.)

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| N   | 93  |
| Yes | 57% |
| No  | 43% |

---

B.5.a.1. Did you complete a degree or certificate? (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.5.a. that they are no longer enrolled at a higher education institution.)

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| N   | 40  |
| Yes | 30% |
| No  | 70% |

---

B.5.a.2. Have you completed a degree or certificate since you last attended Western? (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.3. that their current principal activity is attending another institution.)

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| N   | 388 |
| Yes | 7%  |
| No  | 93% |

---

B.5.b.2.a. What degree are you working towards? (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.1.a., B.5.a., or B.5.a.2. that they have enrolled or are still enrolled in another institution.)

|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| N           | 458 |
| Certificate | 3%  |
| Associate's | 16% |
| Bachelor's  | 75% |
| Other       | 6%  |
| None        | 1%  |

B.5.b.2.a.1. What is your major area of study? (Open-ended question asked of respondents who indicated in B.5.b.2.a. that they are working towards a degree or certificate.) (Frequencies are reported.) (Text responses available on request.)

|   |    |
|---|----|
| N=378                                       |    |
| Nursing                                     | 23 |
| Business administration/management          | 20 |
| Education                                   | 19 |
| Psychology                                  | 19 |
| Communications                              | 12 |
| Environmental Science/Environmental Studies | 11 |
| Accounting                                  | 10 |
| Biology                                     | 10 |
| English                                     | 8  |
| Computer Networking/Computer science        | 6  |
| Geology                                     | 6  |
| Mathematics                                 | 6  |
| Mechanical Engineering                      | 6  |
| Biochemistry                                | 5  |
| Graphic Design                              | 5  |
| History                                     | 5  |
| International Business                      | 5  |
| Marine Biology/marine science               | 5  |
| Radiology/Radiation therapy                 | 5  |
| 18 programs were mentio                     |    |
| 96 programs were mentio                     |    |
| 8 respondents are undecided/unsure          |    |

B.5.b.2.b. What degree did you earn? (Asked of respondents who indicated in B.5.b.1. or B.5.b.2. that they have completed a degree or certificate at another institution.)

|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| N           | 40  |
| Certificate | 25% |
| Associate's | 53% |
| Bachelor's  | 23% |
| Other       |     |
| None        |     |

B.5.b.2.b.1. What was your major area of study? (Open-ended question asked of respondents who indicated in B.5.b.2.b. that they have earned a degree or certificate.) (N=25) (Responses included: accounting, audio engineering, cosmetology, construction, fire-fighting, nursing, physical therapy.) (Text responses available on request.)

B.6. Before leaving Western, did you talk with a faculty or staff member about your decision to leave?

|     |     |
|-----|-----|
| N   | 920 |
| Yes | 39% |
| No  | 61% |

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B.7. Was there anything that could have been done to make your experience at Western more successful? (Open-ended question asked of all respondents.) (N=623) (Table of response categories provided in Appendix A.) (Text responses available on request.)

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B.8. Is there anything else you would like us to know about your experiences at Western? (Open-ended question asked of all respondents.) (N=482) (Table of response categories provided in Appendix B.) (Text responses available on request.)

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## Appendix A.

### Was there anything that could have been done to make your experience at Western more successful? (N=623)

Open-ended question. Frequencies sum to more than the number of respondents because respondents provided multiple comments. Text responses available on request.

| Response Categories  | Frequencies |
|--|-------------|
| Better advising /better guidance/better access to advising   | 45          |
| Financial aid issues; better financial aid services/more grant money/approval for financial aid    | 39          |
| Lower tuition/affordable education/housing   | 39          |
| Western doesn't offer the major/program/degree wanted  | 26          |
| Better faculty/quality of faculty/faculty who have positive attitude toward students               | 23          |
| Better access to classes needed/wanted (classes full/bottlenecking/sequencing)                     | 20          |
| I plan to return to Western  | 19          |
| Better housing situation/better dorms/better support from R.A.'s re: housing issues                | 15          |
| Better major program/better classes in major   | 10          |
| I could have worked harder/studied more/utilized resources/found ways to improve academically      | 10          |
| I couldn't get support/understanding from faculty/staff to accommodate academic or personal issues | 10          |
| Better orientation/mentorship/ support for new students about resources, opportunities             | 9           |
| Counseling/health services for personal issues (didn't get the help needed)                        | 9           |
| Smaller classes/classes other than lecture and powerpoint  | 9           |
| I wanted to attend elsewhere   | 8           |
| Better grading system/different testing  | 7           |
| Better staff   | 7           |
| Didn't like environment/community of Western   | 7           |
| Online classes /online program   | 7           |
| Tutoring/time management/test taking (didn't get the help needed)                                  | 7           |
| Better application processes (major access/ and re-applying to Western)                            | 6           |
| Better faculty-student communications  | 6           |
| Better GUR system/GURS have nothing to do with my area of study                                    | 6           |
| Didn't feel welcome/connected  | 6           |
| I wanted to be near family/closer to home  | 6           |
| More classes in the major  | 6           |
| Diversity is lacking/cultural awareness for staff  | 5           |
| Yes / on my end  | 5           |
| Better system for transfer of credits (credits didn't transfer to/from Western)                    | 4           |
| Couldn't get into the major/program I wanted   | 4           |
| I didn't have a peer network/support system  | 4           |
| Open up classes for non-majors/make classes available for non-majors to explore possibilities      | 4           |
| Better food in the dorms/accommodations for allergies  | 3           |
| Classes offered in evenings to schedule around work  | 3           |
| Classes were not challenging enough  | 3           |
| Help getting a job /job opportunities  | 3           |
| I didn't know what I wanted to study   | 3           |
| Improve campus safety and plans for handling emergencies   | 3           |
| Open attitude/ideological tolerance/moderation   | 3           |
| Miscellaneous  | 15          |
| No/probably not  | 148         |
| No/It was on my end/personal reasons   | 77          |
| No/I had a good experience at Western/it was on my end   | 77          |

## Appendix B.

### **Is there anything else you would like us to know about your experiences at Western? (Open-ended question asked of all respondents.) (N=482)**

Open-ended question. Frequencies sum to more than the number of respondents because respondents provided multiple comments. Text responses available on request.

| <b>Response Categories</b>   | <b>Frequencies</b> |
|--|--------------------|
| Western was great/met expectations/great school                        | 151                |
| Wants to return to Western/will return to western                      | 53                 |
| Finances/debt issues/tuition too expensive                             | 27                 |
| Personal/family/health/hardship withdrawel issues                      | 27                 |
| Attending another institution  | 19                 |
| Western doesn't offer program wanted/another school has better program | 14                 |
| Difficulties with faculty/faculty did not meet expectations            | 13                 |
| Need better academics/curriculum                                       | 11                 |
| Dissatisfied with major department/program requirements                | 10                 |
| Great faculty/Faculty met expectations                                 | 10                 |
| Need better community/atmosphere/culture                               | 9                  |
| Too close to home/too far away from home/ location                     | 9                  |
| Bad dorms//RA's/lack of assistance with living situation               | 8                  |
| Better advising/better support needed                                  | 8                  |
| Transfer student issues/lack of assistance transitioning to Western    | 8                  |
| Difficulty getting into classes for major                              | 6                  |
| Program/classes were good/ curriculum met expectations                 | 6                  |
| Class structure/availability/variety                                   | 5                  |
| Communication needs improvement among faculty/staff                    | 5                  |
| Lack of a nursing program  | 5                  |
| Prejudice/discrimination/lack of acceptance                            | 5                  |
| Dining Services lacking/food is inadequate                             | 4                  |
| Staff were helpful   | 4                  |
| Work was more important than school                                    | 4                  |
| Dissatisfied with General University Requirements                      | 3                  |
| Lack of diversity  | 3                  |
| Lack of school spirit/support for athletics                            | 3                  |
| Western did not meet expectations/experience at Western was lacking    | 3                  |
| Western wasn't a good fit for me/I wasn't able to connect              | 3                  |
| Financial Aid department lacking                                       | 2                  |
| Lack of assistance with DisAbility /accommodation of needs             | 3                  |
| Problems with staff  | 2                  |
| Small classes are preferred  | 2                  |
| Miscellaneous  | 30                 |
| No/nope/none   | 140                |