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# Western Washington University Survey of Former Students

Western Washington University. Office of Survey Research

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WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

# *Survey of Former Students*



Office of Survey Research  
Western Washington University  
Bellingham, Washington 98225-9081  
Winter, 1991



Thank you for your assistance with this important project. The information you provide will be used to improve education and student life at Western.

**Your participation is extremely important** to the scientific validity of this study. We very much appreciate your prompt reply.

All questionnaires are guaranteed complete confidentiality.

To return your survey, fold it in half and insert it in the postage-paid return envelope provided. Thanks!

*For most questions in this survey, please circle the number next to or under the answer you choose. Please answer every question unless you are directed to skip particular questions.*

*However, some questions may not fit your experience, because we are contacting people with very different experiences. If any questions do not apply to you, just circle the number beside "not applic." or leave the question blank.*

*Thank you.*

To return this questionnaire, use the self-addressed, postage-paid envelope provided or send to:

OFFICE OF SURVEY RESEARCH  
WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
BELLINGHAM, WA. 98225-9081

**Q.1.** While you were enrolled at Western, were you working toward a degree, or primarily taking courses for some other purpose?

1. Working toward a degree      2. Other: job related      3. Other: personal

**Q.2.** Please indicate whether each factor below was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason why you left Western.

	<u>MAJOR</u>	<u>MINOR</u>	<u>NOT</u>
a. Found a good work opportunity	1	2	3
b. Achieved my goals and felt no more need to attend	1	2	3
c. Decided to transfer to another college	1	2	3
d. Realized I was not interested in college	1	2	3
e. Was not performing well enough in school	1	2	3
f. Had financial problems	1	2	3
g. Wanted time away from school to decide on my goals	1	2	3
h. Lacked friends or a good social life at Western	1	2	3
i. Was dissatisfied with professors or courses	1	2	3
j. Felt too little direction or concern from faculty	1	2	3
k. Courses or programs I wanted did not exist at Western	1	2	3
l. Courses or programs I wanted were too hard to get into	1	2	3
m. Family obligations, personal or medical reasons	1	2	3
n. Environment at Western was not culturally diverse	1	2	3
o. Felt I didn't fit in at Western	1	2	3
p. Disappointed by the large classes I had to take	1	2	3

OTHER IMPORTANT REASON \_\_\_\_\_

**Q.3.** How likely is it that you will return to Western to continue your education?

1. Definitely      2. Probably      3. Undecided      4. Probably Not      5. Definitely Not

**Q.4.** Have you been enrolled in a degree program at any college or university since attending Western?

1. No      ==> **SKIP TO QUESTION 7.**  
2. Yes      ==> **CONTINUE WITH NEXT QUESTION**

**Q.5.** Did you enter another school within a six month period after leaving Western?

1. No      2. Yes

**Q.6.** Please complete the information below concerning the school(s) you have attended since Western. (If you attended more than two, please list the two major ones and any degrees you have earned.)

FIRST:		
Name of School	Major Field	Degree Sought

SECOND:		
Name of School	Major Field	Degree Sought

**Q.7.** What is the highest degree you plan to complete at any time?

1. Bachelors      2. Masters      3. Post-Masters      4. none Further      8. Undecided

***Now we have some questions about your time at Western***

**Q.8.** Did you enter Western as a freshman or as a transfer from another college?

1. As a freshman      2. As a transfer with an A.A.      3. As a transfer without an A.A.

**Q.9.** For each stage of higher education below, did you have a major field of study in mind at that time and, if so, what was it?

- a. When you first began college  
(if different from Western)      1. No      2. Yes : \_\_\_\_\_
- b. When you first entered Western      1. No      2. Yes : \_\_\_\_\_
- c. When you last attended Western      1. No      2. Yes : \_\_\_\_\_

**If you answered "NO" on 9a and 9b, please skip to question 12.**

**Q.10.** What proportion of the courses required by your major did you complete before leaving Western?

1. All      2. Most      3. Half      4. Some  
5. None ==> Skip to Question 12

**Q.11.** Looking back, how satisfied are you with these aspects of your major at Western:

	VERY	MODER- ATELY	SOME- WHAT	NOT AT ALL	NOT APPLICABLE
a. The availability of courses	1	2	3	4	8
b. The quality of instruction	1	2	3	4	8

**Q.12.** Please indicate whether or not you participated in each of the following orientation activities as a new student at Western.

- 1. No      2. Yes      Summer Start
- 1. No      2. Yes      A group orientation session regarding campus services
- 1. No      2. Yes      A group orientation session regarding academic issues and procedures
- 1. No      2. Yes      Social gatherings held during orientation week
- 1. No      2. Yes      Workshops held during orientation week, on topics such as note taking

**Q.13.** Please indicate whether you found each of the following aspects of your transition to Western easy or difficult.

	VERY DIFFICULT	SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT	EASY	NOT APPLICABLE
a. Managing administrative matters like getting registered and getting financial aid	1	2	3	8
b. Learning about academic issues such as course scheduling and professors' expectations	1	2	3	8
c. Learning what courses you needed to take	1	2	3	8
d. Getting into the courses you needed	1	2	3	8

**Q.14.** For each pair of opposed educational goals listed below, please circle the number (1-3) that best indicate the relative importance you placed on each goal while you were attending Western.

	<u>Relative Importance:</u>			
	<u>&lt;-more</u>	<u>equal</u>	<u>more-&gt;</u>	
a. To obtain a degree .....	1	2	3	To learn a great deal
b. To get training preparing me for a specific occupation .....	1	2	3	To get a well-rounded education preparing me for life as a whole

**Q.15.** Which number best describes you as an undergraduate at Western?

	<u>Relative Importance:</u>			
	<u>&lt;-more</u>	<u>equal</u>	<u>more-&gt;</u>	
a. I knew exactly what I wanted to get out of college .....	1	2	3	I felt college was necessary without a clear reason why
c. Studying and learning were what mattered to me .....	1	2	3	Social life and "getting through" were what mattered to me

**Q.16.** Which number best indicates what you think is most important in choosing a major?

	<u>Relative Importance:</u>			
	<u>&lt;-more</u>	<u>equal</u>	<u>more-&gt;</u>	
Because of the employment opportunities it would produce	1	2	3	Because I enjoyed or valued the subject matter

**Q.17.** Please indicate whether you experienced each of the problems below while at Western by circling the number of the most appropriate response.

Never experienced this problem

Had this problem, but did not seek assistance

Had this problem but received unsatisfactory assistance

Had this problem and received satisfactory assistance

- |   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | a. Serious physical health problems  |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | b. Loneliness and depression   |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | c. Serious confusion over life meaning or spirituality   |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | d. Serious difficulty with time management   |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | e. Feeling unsafe on campus at night   |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | f. Inability to make important life decisions such as career choice  |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | g. A serious shortage of money   |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | h. A clear case of unfair grading by a professor   |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | i. Drinking or using drugs more than you wanted to   |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | j. Physical assault (by anyone, acquaintance or other)   |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | k. Theft of your personal property   |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | l. Forced sexual intercourse (by anyone, acquaintance or other)  |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | m. Unwanted verbal or physical sexual behavior by a member of the faculty or staff, that made you feel intimidated or unsafe               |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | n. Harassing actions by students, that made you feel intimidated or unsafe, including harassment of a religious, sexual, or racial nature. |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | o. Other (Please specify: _____)   |

**Q.18.** If any of the problems above was a major reason why you left Western, please indicate which one(s) by writing in the appropriate letter(s) (a to o) here: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q.19.** About how many hours per week did you typically study, during your first year (or partial year) at Western?

<u>0-4</u>	<u>5-9</u>	<u>10-14</u>	<u>15-19</u>	<u>20-24</u>	<u>25-29</u>	<u>30-34</u>	<u>35+</u>	<u>Don't Recall</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

**Q.20.** In a typical week while you were enrolled at Western, how many hours, if any, were you employed (including work study)?

\_\_\_\_\_ HOURS PER WEEK

**Q.21.** While you were at Western, approximately what percent of the cost of your education was provided by each of the following? (Please total to 100%.)

- Your parents' or family's earnings and savings \_\_\_\_\_ %  
 Loans you or your parents or family took for your education \_\_\_\_\_ %  
 Your own savings or earnings (not including work study) \_\_\_\_\_ %  
 Financial aid other than loans, including work study \_\_\_\_\_ %

**Q.22.** Currently, what is the total you owe for student loans (guaranteed student loans or other loans taken entirely to finance your education)? Please round to the nearest \$500.

TOTAL LOANS: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00

**Q.23.** The following are services or facilities available at Western. For each, please circle the number that is most appropriate for you.

- I never used this/not applicable  
 I used this but was NOT satisfied with it  
 I used this and was moderately satisfied with it  
 I used this and was very satisfied with it

- |   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | University residences                            |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Student financial aid                            |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Associated student clubs and other organizations |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Departmental/faculty advising concerning courses |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Departmental/faculty advising concerning careers |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Academic advising center                         |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Tutorial center                                  |
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | Counseling center                                |

**Q.24.** Looking back, how satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of Western?

	<u>VERY</u>	<u>MOSTLY</u>	<u>SOME- WHAT</u>	<u>NOT AT ALL</u>	<u>CAN'T SAY/ NOT APPLIC</u>
a. Professors and courses at Western	1	2	3	4	9
b. Students at Western	1	2	3	4	9
d. Cultural and social events on campus	1	2	3	4	9
e. The orientation you received as a new student	1	2	3	4	9
f. Non-academic services available to students	1	2	3	4	9
g. Bellingham as a place to live	1	2	3	4	9
h. The quality of your social life at Western	1	2	3	4	9
i. The amount of ethnic and cultural diversity in the student body	1	2	3	4	9
j. How fairly & accurately Western professors graded	1	2	3	4	9
k. Western Washington University, in total	1	2	3	4	9



***If you spent fewer than two full quarters at Western, please skip to question 26.***

**Q.25.** From your current perspective, how satisfied are you with Western's contribution to your growth in each of the following areas.

	<u>VERY</u>	<u>MOSTLY</u>	<u>SOME- WHAT</u>	<u>A LITTLE</u>	<u>NOT AT ALL</u>	<u>CAN'T SAY/ NOT APPLIC.</u>
a. Communicating effectively	1	2	3	4	5	9
b. Understanding and applying quantitative principles and methods	1	2	3	4	5	9
c. Understanding and appreciating the arts	1	2	3	4	5	9
d. Recognizing your rights, responsibilities, and privileges as a citizen	1	2	3	4	5	9
e. Defining and solving problems	1	2	3	4	5	9
f. Understanding differing philosophies and cultures	1	2	3	4	5	9
g. Understanding the interaction of society and the environment	1	2	3	4	5	9
h. Understanding the nature of human development and interaction	1	2	3	4	5	9

**Q.26.** If you could go back in time and repeat your education knowing what you know now, please indicate what major changes, if any, you would make.

***For the next questions, please circle the number that best indicates whether you agree or disagree with each statement.***

**Q.27.** My values and beliefs changed a lot as a result of attending Western.  
 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.28.** Western does too little to encourage students' creativity.  
 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.29.** I took courses from some Western faculty who were so outstanding that they have had a special impact on my life.  
 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.30.** One of the best things about attending Western was getting to interact with students from so many different cultures, ethnic groups, and ways of life.

- 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.31.** I often needed more or better advising than I was able to get at Western.

- 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.32.** During college, I learned that my occupational aspirations during high school were unrealistically high.

- 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.33.** It would be valuable for students to be given suggested sequences or combinations of GURs.

- 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.34.** I would be likely to recommend Western Washington University to friends.

- 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.35.** A lot of courses at Western are too demanding for many of the students enrolled in them.

- 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.36.** For most courses at Western, a grade of "C" does not necessarily mean that a student learned much.

- 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.37.** If every student had at least one small class during the first quarter at Western, adjustment to school would be a lot better.

- 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**Q.38.** At least one introductory or General University Requirement (GUR) course I took at Western discouraged my interest in remaining in higher education at Western.

- 1 . strongly agree    2 . agree    3 . undecided    4 . disagree    5 . strongly disagree

**IF you marked "1" or "2," please indicate what field(s):**

--

**Finally, we'd like a little information about your background and your life now.**

**Q.39.** Which of the following best describes your current employment situation?

- 1 . . Employed for pay ..... ==> CONTINUE, NEXT QUESTION
- 2 . . Self-employed ..... ==> CONTINUE, NEXT QUESTION
- 3 . . Unemployed, looking for work ..... ==> SKIP TO QUESTION 44
- 4 . . Not employed, not looking for work at this time ==> SKIP TO QUESTION 44

**Q.40.** How many hours per week do you normally work? \_\_\_\_\_ HOURS/ WEEK

**Q.41.** What is your annual income from all sources before deductions? (All answers are confidential.)

- 1 . . Less than \$5,000                      4 . . \$15,000 - \$19,999                      7 . . \$30,000 - \$34,999
- 2 . . \$5,000 - \$9,999                      5 . . \$20,000 - \$24,999                      8 . . \$35,000 - \$39,999
- 3 . . \$10,000 - \$14,999                      6 . . \$25,000 - \$29,999                      9 . . \$40,000 or more

**Q.42.** Approximately how long have you held this job? \_\_\_\_\_ MONTHS

**Q.43.** How likely are you to stay in the same type of work for the next ten years?

- 1 . Definitely    2 . Probably    3 . Probably Not    4 . Definitely Not    9 . can't say

**Q.44.** How satisfied are you with each of the following aspects of your life?

	<u>VERY</u>	<u>MODER- ATELY</u>	<u>SOME- WHAT</u>	<u>NOT AT ALL</u>	<u>DONT KNOW</u>
a. Your family life	1	2	3	4	9
b. Your leisure time	1	2	3	4	9
c. Your standard of living	1	2	3	4	9
d. Your health	1	2	3	4	9
e. Your government	1	2	3	4	9
f. Your community	1	2	3	4	9
g. Your housing	1	2	3	4	9
h. Your friendships and social life	1	2	3	4	9
i. Your work (or employment situation)	1	2	3	4	9

**Q.48.** Compared to others your age, how would you rate your happiness?

- |                 |                     |                   |                        |                    |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1               | 2                   | 3                 | 4                      | 5                  |
| Much<br>Happier | Somewhat<br>Happier | About the<br>Same | Somewhat<br>Less Happy | Much Less<br>Happy |

**Q.49.** What was your marital status when you first enrolled at Western?

1. . Never married      2. . Divorced, separated, widowed      3. . Married

**Q.50.** When you left Western, what was your marital status?

1. . Never married      2. . Divorced, separated, widowed      3. . Married

**Q.51.** What was your approximate high school grade point average?

- |              |         |         |                   |
|--------------|---------|---------|-------------------|
| 1. . Below C | 3. . B- | 5. . B+ | 7. . A            |
| 2. . C to C+ | 4. . B  | 6. . A- | 8. . Don't recall |

**Q.52.** What was the highest level of education your mother and father attained?

**Mother:**

1. . Less than H.S. grad	3. . Some college	5. . Bachelors Degree
2. . High school grad	4. . AA degree	6. . Masters or more

**Father:**

1. . Less than H.S. grad	3. . Some college	5. . Bachelors Degree
2. . High school grad	4. . AA degree	6. . Masters or more

**Q.53.** Approximately how many of your friends in high school attended college?

1. All      2. Most      3. Some      4. A Few      5. None      8. Not sure

**Q.54.** What is your political orientation?

1. . Liberal    2. . Moderate-liberal    3. . Middle of the road    4. . Moderate-conservative    5. . Conservative

**Thank you for completing this survey.**

We also have an **optional request**. We would appreciate your responses to either or both of the questions on the back cover of the survey. We'll be pleased to receive your survey without these final questions completed, but your thoughts would be useful. If you comment on either or both questions, we will make copies for our strategic planning committees and the provost's office.

**Optional Question A.** What change(s), if any, might have made it possible or desirable for you to remain at Western to complete your degree?

**Optional Question B.** When you were considering whether or not to withdraw from Western, what factors most influenced you to remain?

Sequence Number: 0091 \_\_\_\_\_

(This number is essential for our record keeping and does not in any way compromise the confidentiality of your questionnaire.)

**Again, thank you for helping with this important project!**