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Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS): Survey of In-coming Transfers in Transition, Late Fall Quarter, 2005

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Survey of In-coming Transfers in Transition,
Late Fall Quarter, 2005

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May, 2006

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RESEARCH NOTES REPORT SERIES • REPORT 2006-03

INTRODUCTION

The Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) was conceived as a process to obtain data more relevant to Western and its mission than survey data had been able to obtain previously. Rather than continuing to rely on outside survey forms, researchers developed a Western-specific survey form. Development of this survey took about three years, with researchers soliciting input from dozens of individuals, departments and offices. Along the way, WELS researchers also noted where data was already being collected so that doubling up on survey questions was minimized.

The final survey form was considered by all participants to be as thorough and Western-specific as it could be. In the inaugural WELS survey, 1580 in-coming 2003 freshmen participated. These respondents became the baseline cohort. From this baseline—and also from the general population of Western students—samples have been and will continue to be drawn for subsequent WELS surveys.

The fall, 2005, transitions survey was administered to all 1029 transfer students who entered Western in the fall quarter, 2005. Of those students, about 85% had taken the WELS baseline in the summer, 2005. Students were emailed the transition survey at the end of fall quarter and several reminders followed through the beginning of winter quarter. On a limited basis, students were called to take the survey over the phone. Of the transfer students who took the survey, 480 took it online and 19 took it over the phone. A total of 499 transfer students took the survey yielding a response rate of 48%.

General topics covered in the late fall/early winter, 2005, survey included: initial perceptions and expectations; academic self-perceptions; college preparedness, concern, and motivation; high school experiences; and personal self-perceptions.

Other principle WELS frequency reports to date include:

- Baseline (summer, 2003): *Western Educational Longitudinal Study* (OIART Report 2003-02).
 - First quarter transitions (late fall, 2003): *Fall 2003 Freshmen Transition* (OIART Focus Summary, Issue 8, Volume 4).
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- End of first year follow-up (spring, 2004): *Follow-up of Freshmen Entering Fall, 2003* (OIART Report 2004-01).
 - End of sophomore year follow-up (spring, 2005): *Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS): Spring Follow-up of Freshmen Entering Fall, 2003* (OIART Report 2006-01).
 - Baseline (summer / fall, 2005): *Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS) Survey of Fall, 2005, In-coming Transfer Students* (OIART Report 2006-02).
 - Baseline (summer / fall, 2005): *Western Educational Longitudinal Study (WELS): Fall, 2005, Baseline Survey of In-coming Freshmen* (OIART Report 2006-03).

All OIART reports can be accessed in pdf form at <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/assess>. For hard copies, please contact Gary McKinney. E-mail: gary.mckinney@wvu.edu. Telephone: 360-650-3409.

WELS Transition Survey of Fall, 2005, In-coming
Transfers during the Late Fall Quarter, 2005, and
Early Winter Quarter, 2006

FINDINGS

WELS Transitions Survey Fall 2005 - Online Survey of Transfers - Late Fall Quarter, 2005

	Strongly agree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
Below is a list of statements about the student culture at Western. Please read each statement and tell us to what extent you agree or disagree that each is true based on impressions you have formed thus far. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the statement that "Western is a place where..."									
students are regularly engaged in intellectual/academic discussions outside the classroom. (N=491)	2.6	8.4	10.4	25.3	29.7	19.3	4.3		
students are focused on social relationships more than academics (n=489)	2.9	9.6	19.4	32.9	22.7	10.4	2.0		
students are actively engaged in political and environmental causes (n = 410)	1.7	8.0	13.2	18.3	32.7	18.8	7.3		
there is a lot of drinking and pot smoking (or other drug use) (n = 485)	6.6	8.9	9.3	27.2	22.7	16.1	9.3		
life in the residence halls is clearly separate from life in the classroom (n = 468)	2.4	2.4	6.2	59.8	14.1	10.3	4.9		
there are many opportunities for social activities so it is difficult to study (n = 487)	7.6	15.4	20.1	34.5	16.2	4.3	1.8		
religion and religious activity play a central role in students' lives (n = 415)	8.7	14.5	16.1	40.0	14.9	4.1	1.7		
many students have friendships with others of different race/ethnicity (n = 414)	2.9	6.3	5.8	15.5	24.6	24.2	20.8		
Students accept others with different lifestyles, ability levels and values (n = 490)	1.6	4.5	5.7	10.4	25.3	31.6	20.8		

WELS Transitions Survey Fall 2005 - Online Survey of Transfers - Late Fall Quarter, 2005

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Please rate your transition to Western in terms of the following...					
Getting access to the courses you need (n = 496)	6.7	14.1	28.2	36.7	14.3
Developing good relationships with professors (n = 494)	1.4	8.9	35.8	39.7	14.2
Getting information about required courses, prerequisites, etc. (n = 420)	3.3	10.2	31.7	43.1	11.7
Getting the advising you needed (n = 496)	5.4	14.1	33.9	35.7	10.9
Getting well-situated in your new residence (n = 454)	1.8	3.7	31.9	41.9	20.7
Feeling like you fit in with others (n = 418)	3.6	12.7	31.8	35.9	16.0
Your transition, overall (n = 420)	2.1	5.0	30.5	48.6	13.8
	Not at all well	A little well	Somewhat well	Very well	Extremely well
Please rate how well you think your previous school prepared you for coursework at Western. (n = 421)	2.9	10.5	29.7	37.1	20.0

WELS Transitions Survey Fall 2005 - Online Survey of Transfers - Late Fall Quarter, 2005

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely			
How difficult has each of the following been for you personally this fall?								
Having enough money and dealing with financial matters and concerns (n = 496)	14.7	24.8	34.1	15.9	10.5			
Getting the emotional support you need to do well in school (n = 493)	39.6	27.0	22.7	7.3	3.4			
Managing stress and other sources of emotional upset (n = 497)	18.1	34.4	29.2	13.7	4.6			
Getting enough sleep (n = 496)	12.9	31.3	28.8	18.3	8.7			
Handling the use of alcohol and drugs (n = 493)	80.5	12.2	5.1	1.6	0.6			
Fitting in with others and making friends at Western (n = 494)	30.8	32.2	23.3	10.9	2.8			
Meeting family expectations for, or interference with, your academic work (n = 495)	47.9	25.1	18.6	6.3	2.2			
Finding people you get along with, making friends (n = 495)	33.9	29.9	23.2	10.1	2.8			
Maintaining, forming or ending romantic relationships (n = 479)	37.0	23.0	19.8	13.2	7.1			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Almost daily
During fall quarter, how many days during a typical week would you say you...								
got less than 8 hours of sleep? (n = 421)	2.4	7.8	15.2	16.4	15.4	18.3	5.5	19.0
got at least 30 minutes of planned exercise? (n = 418)	26.3	16.5	17.2	12.2	9.3	9.3	2.9	6.2
skipped lunch or dinner? (n = 419)	20.5	10.5	21.0	16.5	9.8	6.2	3.3	12.2
drank too much alcohol or used drugs recreationally? (n = 420)	71.2	13.6	7.4	2.6	1.7	1.4	0.2	1.9

	Yes: work regular job		Yes: work study		No	
Have you worked at a job on a regular basis for pay or work study this quarter? (n = 489)	42.5		2.7		54.8	
How many hours a week have you typically worked this quarter? (n = 489)	No hours	54.4	Less than 10 hours	7.0	10-19 hours	20.2
			20-29 hours	14.1	30 or more hours	4.3

How difficult has each of the following been for you this Fall?	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
Managing your coursework (n = 499)	15.2	38.3	35.1	8.0	3.4
Performing well in large lecture classes (n = 492)	40.7	26.4	20.1	8.9	3.9
Preparing for and presenting your work in front of a class (n = 411)	46.5	25.8	16.3	7.5	3.9
Sharing with other students in a discussion group (n = 418)	50.5	27.8	14.8	6.0	1.0
Attending classes regularly (n = 498)	61.0	24.1	9.4	4.2	1.2
Completing reading and coursework on time (n = 497)	24.9	36.8	24.3	10.7	3.2
Performing well on multiple choice exams (n = 485)	33.4	30.3	21.2	10.1	4.9
Writing long, in-depth papers (n = 477)	35.2	29.1	22.4	10.9	2.3
Meeting the expectations and obligations of your parents or other family members (n = 496)	51.8	28.4	12.5	4.2	3.0
Meeting the expectations and obligations of your friends or peer group (n = 494)	58.3	24.5	13.6	2.0	1.6
Meeting the expectations and obligations of your boyfriend/girlfriend or other romantic relationships (n = 482)	58.1	22.2	12.9	4.1	2.7
Balancing the time and other demands of family, friends, school, and/or your workplace (n = 497)	14.9	35.8	30.2	12.9	6.2

Have you been receiving the <i>This week@wvu</i> weekly emails from New Student Services/Family Outreach (sent every Monday starting in late September)? (n = 479)	Yes	No
	70.7	29.3

How often have you read these emails in detail each time you received them? (n = 499)	Never	Once or twice	A few times	Almost always	Always
	42.5	20.8	18.0	13.6	5.0

How often have you attended events or activities because you found out about them through these weekly emails? (n = 499)	Never	Once or twice	A few times	Almost always	Always
	70.7	22.8	6.2	0.2	0.0

WELS Transitions Survey Fall 2005 - Online Survey of Transfers - Late Fall Quarter, 2005

How valuable did you find each of the following programs or events to be in helping you make a good transition to Western, either socially, academically, or both?	Did not attend or participate	Not at all valuable	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
Transitions Make-up for transfers (Sept 12) (n = 493)	64.7	7.9	8.5	9.9	6.3	2.6
Fall orientation for freshmen (Sept 19) (n = 489)	94.3	1.4	1.6	1.4	0.8	0.4
Freshmen advising connection (Nov 8) (n = 488)	97.5	1.0	0.2	0.8	0.4	0.0
Advising in the residence halls program - open and general sessions (Oct 31-Nov 21) (n = 489)	94.7	1.6	1.4	1.8	0.4	0.0
Opening Convocation, first week of classes (n = 491)	82.3	4.1	5.7	3.9	3.5	0.6
LateNight@WWU at the Wade King Student Recreation Center (Mon Sept 19) (n = 490)	91.4	2.9	2.7	1.4	1.0	0.6
LateNight@WWU at the Viking Union (Fri Sept 23) (n = 491)	91.6	1.8	2.4	2.4	1.2	0.4
High Street Music Festival (Sat, Sept 24) (n = 491)	86.4	3.3	3.1	3.5	2.4	1.4
Night Out with the Vikings (Fri, Sept 30) (n = 490)	97.3	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.2	0.2
Ethnic Student Center (ESC) Kick-off at the PAC (Sat, Sept 24) (n = 490)	98.2	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.2	0.4
Ethnic Student Center (ESC) Retreat at Camp Casey (Oct 21-22) (n = 491)	98.6	0.4	0.0	0.6	0.4	0.0
College of Science & Technology Scholars program (meets three times throughout quarter) (n = 487)	99.0	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.0
Distinguished Lecture Series--Jonathon Kozol (Sept 29) (n = 490)	95.3	0.8	0.8	2.0	0.6	0.4
Distinguished Lecture Series--John Paul Jones (Oct 7) (n = 490)	97.3	0.2	0.2	1.0	0.6	0.6
Distinguished Lecture Series--Rita Dove (Oct 27) (n = 486)	96.3	0.2	0.2	1.2	1.0	1.0

WELS Transitions Survey Fall 2005 - Online Survey of Transfers - Late Fall Quarter, 2005

How valuable did you find each of the following programs or events to be in helping you make a good transition to Western, either socially, academically, or both? (cont.)	Did not attend or participate	Not at all valuable	A little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
Project FreshStart (alcohol assessment) Sept 20-Oct 2 (n = 488)	98.6	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.0
MSLQ (Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire) in FIGS seminar (n = 490)	99.0	0.2	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.0
MSLQ (Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire) in residence hall (n = 484)	98.8	0.2	0.4	0.6	0.0	0.0
Battle in Seattle (Sat Oct 8) (n = 489)	93.3	1.0	1.4	2.5	1.4	0.4
A Chance for Change Service Learning Fair (Tue, Oct 18) (n = 487)	96.7	0.6	0.2	1.4	0.8	0.2
Make a Difference Day - Day of Service (Sat, Oct 22) (n = 490)	95.3	0.8	0.4	1.6	0.8	1.0
FIGS (First year interest groups) (n = 488)	99.0	0.2	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.0
Western's Really Big Weekend (Nov 4-6) (n=488)	88.5	1.8	4.3	3.3	1.6	0.4
Western Acts (Sept 19-20) (n = 489)	97.8	0.8	0.2	1.0	0.0	0.2
Turning Point Lecture with Dawn Prince Hughes (Nov 16) (n = 488)	98.8	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.0

Did you attend one of the Western Reads discussion sessions on The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night that took place at the beginning of the quarter (Sept 19 or 20)? (n = 497)	Yes	No			
	8.7	91.3			
If YES. How valuable did you find the experience? (n = 44)	Not at All	A Little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
	9.0	29.5	47.7	4.5	9.0
Did you attend one of the two faculty panel discussions on The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night that took place during Fall Quarter (Oct 20 or Nov 8)? (n = 493)	Yes	No			
	2.2	97.8			
If YES. How valuable did you find the experience? (n = 14)	Not at All	A Little	Somewhat	Very	Extremely
	14.3	14.3	50.0	7.1	14.3

	Not at All Important	A Little Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
If you did not attend any one of the three Western Reads sessions listed above (in Questions 10 and 11), how important were each of the following in your decision to not attend?					
Didn't read the book (n = 436)	65.4	6.4	5.0	5.7	17.4
Didn't hear about the discussions (n = 433)	53.6	15.2	12.5	7.6	11.1
Conflicted with other activities I wanted to attend (n = 431)	42.9	9.5	17.9	15.5	14.2
Already read and talked about the book with other students and saw no reason to attend (n = 427)	74.9	7.7	9.4	4.2	3.7
Didn't know anyone else who would be attending (n = 429)	48.5	13.3	18.6	11.4	8.2
It didn't sound like something I would be interested in (n = 430)	37.9	13.0	17.0	14.0	18.1
It sounded too much like remedial work (n = 425)	60.5	10.6	12.7	8.2	8.0

WELS Transitions Survey Fall 2005 - Online Survey of Transfers - Late Fall Quarter, 2005

During Fall quarter, did you use any of the following resources and, if so, how satisfied were you with your experience. (e.g., Did you get the information you needed? Was the staff courteous?)	Did Not Use	Used, Not at All Satisfied	Used, Somewhat Satisfied	Used, Very Satisfied	Used, Extremely Satisfied
Academic Advising Center (n = 493)	59.8	3.7	20.3	13.4	2.8
Tutorial and Academic Skills Center (n = 489)	87.9	1.6	5.7	2.5	2.2
Student Outreach Services (n = 490)	94.9	0.4	2.2	1.6	0.8
DisAbility Services (n = 492)	94.9	0.4	1.4	1.6	1.6
Registrar's Office (n = 494)	47.8	5.1	19.4	23.1	4.7
New Student Services (n = 493)	88.0	1.0	5.1	4.9	1.0
Financial Aid Office (n = 496)	53.2	3.0	16.5	19.8	7.5
Career Services Center (n = 491)	88.0	1.0	4.3	5.1	1.6
So far, how satisfied are you with Western? (n = 496)	Can't Say	Not at All	A Little	Somewhat	Very Extremely
	1.6	2.8	7.9	30.4	46.4 10.9