

**UWB/T Transfer Student Survey**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Report: Academic Priorities**

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**Executive Summary**

- Between March 21 and June 2, 1094 regional community college students participated in a UWB survey regarding college transfer. The largest response was from Bellevue CC (n=579) and the smallest from Cascadia (n=60). Shoreline generated 202 responses, while Everett generated 253.
- 974 of these students indicated some desire to attend a 4-year school
- Of these 47% or 466 students when asked the likelihood they would apply to UWB or UWT or Neither, indicated they would apply to UWB
- Six factors scored most highly in questions related to transfer. These include
  - Transfer of credits
  - Quality of Instruction
  - Availability of Preferred Major
  - Degree of Career Preparation
  - Getting Good Grades
  - Commuting Distance
  - Interdisciplinarity, small class size and campus life scored much lower
- Among all students the 5 most desired categories of study were
  - Business 24.8%
  - Health/Nursing 19.1%
  - Social Sciences 16.0 %
  - Computer Science 10.4%
  - Sciences 8.6%
- Among students interested in UWB existing programs preferences are:
  - Business 30.8%
  - Nursing 18.7
  - IAS 18.7
  - CSS 9.7
  - Education 3.9
- These same students were asked about other possible degrees in planning or discussed at UWB. The degrees which received interest from 15 or more students included
  - Psychology (BS)
  - Health Sciences or Pre-health Professions
  - Architecture and Interior Design
  - Human Resources
  - Communications and Media
  - Law

**INTRODUCTION;** Over the period from March 21 to June 2, 1094 students at four regional community colleges responded an e-mail request to complete an online survey about their college plans. The survey remains open, but we do not anticipate a significant number of new responses. A similar survey had been piloted in Tacoma last year.

**BACKGROUND:** Our survey was designed to help us better assess the potential transfer student market. Internal surveys in the past have failed to identify student who have not chosen to apply or attend UWB.

Our fall 2007 first year student report demonstrated that our draw among first year students was highly concentrated among students who were either interested in a Business or CSS degree. After experiencing their first year, a large proportion of our students indicated that they were either considering or planned not to graduate from UWB. First year students appear to attracted to UWB primarily because is conveniently located for commuters, because of our and the UW Seattle reputation for quality, and because of their interest in specific academic programs.

Over the past 7 years, their has been relatively little growth in undergraduate enrollment outside of CUSP. From 2001 to this year, growth was greatest in Business (74.5 FTE), Nursing (38.6 FTE, though a more substantial % gain), Teacher Certification (38.1). IAS, the largest undergraduate program increased by 30.2 FTE, while CSS fell by 74.3. It is however, worthwhile to note that 2001 makes a difficult base year because enrollments surged due to recession (except in computing due to the dot.com crisis). Enrollments fell in the next year. Using 2000 as a base year puts IAS performance closer to other programs (expanding nearly 25% over 8 years, where Business – the next smallest percentage growth program—grew by 42%). However, the decline in CSS becomes larger.

As the campus accepts greater FTE targets in order to expand programs, enrollment has failed to keep pace. This background explains why it is imperative that UWB do a better job understanding the potential transfer, which is the purpose of the Community College Survey.

## **RESULTS**

1. *CC Students responses.* Of 1094 responses, 80 students indicated they were not interest in attending a four year school, and another 74 indicated they were not sure. Those students who were sure they would not apply to a four-year school, were not asked supplementary questions related to UWB or UWT. Cascadia College produced 60 responses, the smallest number among the four (unlike other schools, they sent out no reminder, but they also have the smallest enrollment). Turnout was larger at the other 3 schools, Everett (n=253) Shoreline (n=202), and Bellevue (n= 579). Response rates were typically under 5 percent,

though an analysis of 13000 Bellevue e-mails suggest the vast majority of students did not open their mail.

*2. What are the most important transfer factors among students who indicate they are likely to apply to UWB?*

Using a five point scale the 6 items receiving highest scores involved

1. The ability to transfer credits from current institution (4.9)
2. The quality of instruction (4.8)
3. The availability of desired major (4.7)
3. Preparation for a career (4.7)
4. Getting good grades (4.7)
5. Commuting Distance (4.6)

Factors we have given considerable attention to that scored substantially lower include:

1. Small class size (4.1)
2. Interdisciplinary Curriculum (3.6)
3. Campus Size (2.8)
4. Campus Organization and Activities (2.6 and 2.4)
5. Childcare (1.9)

This data reinforces much of what we have learned. Community college students who come to UWB appear to be interested in pragmatic concerns like preparation for their career, majors, grades and transfer credits. Many of these student, have attended to community colleges because of family or work commitments in the region, and therefore do indicate the same degree of preference for quality campus life as do younger students beginning college for the first time.

*3. What are the most important factors among students who indicate they are NOT likely to apply to UWB?*

a. LOCATION. At each college the largest percentage of students who indicate they are not interested in UWB generally name inconvenient location as their primary factor. This factor is typically named by 40 to 50% of respondents, it was highest at Everett and Bellevue and lowest at Cascadia.

b. MAJORS

Our survey asked four questions about majors, including what their current program of study is, what their desired degree would be, what existing UWB major they were most likely to be interested in, and finally, among majors under possible consideration at UWB, what were their preferred options. The last two questions were asked only of student who indicated an interest in attending UWB.

### b.1 DESIRED MAJORS

Desired programs of study at community colleges may be broadly classified as follows:

Business	24.8%	
Health/Nursing	19.1%	(Nursing is 14.1% of this total)
Social Sciences	16.0 %	(Social science, law, history, policy, etc)
Computer Science	10.4%	(Includes information technology)
Sciences	8.6%	(Excludes 5% health sciences above)
Humanities	7.4%	(Includes Studio Art and Languages)
Engineering	6.8%	
Education	6.4%	

N = 733 and excludes all students who wrote in another degree option.

### b.2 Interest in UWB by Desired Major

Among the 733 students above about half express some interest in applying to UWB. As has been noted in a similar analysis of first year students, the percentage of students indicating interest is typically above average among those for whom UWB offers corresponding majors.

Nursing	76.7%
CSS	70.7%
Business	65.4%

Students who desire majors not related to UWB's current curriculum are much less likely to indicate interest in UWB.

Information Technology	39%
Law or Public Policy	33%
Science	25%
Engineering	20%

Students whose interests are roughly be duplicated by existing programs indicate interest at approximately the school average (history, social science, urban planning, environmental Studies, and humanities).

### b.3 Preferences for existing UWB Majors

The survey asked the 465 student who indicated that they are likely to apply to UWB which of our existing majors they would prefer. These responses are shown below:

Business		30.8%
Accounting	11,2%	
Mngmnt	7.5	

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Finance	4.1	
Mrktg	3,7	
Tx and Innvtn	2.4	
Mngmnt Info System	1.9	
Nursing		18.7%
IAS		18.7%
SEB	4.9	
STE	4.7	
Com Psych	3.4	
CLA	3.2	
Am Studies	1.3	
Global St	1.1	
CSS		9.7%
CSS	8.8%	
Appld Cmptng	.9	
Education		3.9%
K-8 Cert	2.6%	
Secondary Cert	1.3%	

b.4 Preferences for majors under consideration

When given a chance to indicate preferences for majors that are being planned or have been talked about at UWB, 120 of the 465 students indicating interest in UWB indicated a preference for one of the existing UWB majors.

The most frequently indicated majors were

Psychology (BS)	50
Health Sciences or Pre-health Professions	49
Architecture, Design and/or Planning	22
Human Resources	19
Communication and Media Studies	16
Law and Social Justice	16
Electrical Engineering	15
Biology	13
STS	13
History	11
Public Health	11
Creative Arts	10
<b>Combinations of Similar Fields</b>	
All Engineering (Elect, Engrg, Civil, Mech)	32
Law & Soc Policy (16), Public Policy, Pol, Econ(10)	26
Creative Arts or Interdisciplinary arts	17
Envrnmntl Studies/Science	14

Others included fields were:

Chemistry	9
Literature	3

It is worth noting that Psychology primarily students drew away from groups existing majors: Psychology (14,) SEB (8) and None of the Above (10).

Among the 120 students who said that they were most interested in one of the existing majors, the largest group came from Nursing (36), Accounting (21), CSS (18) and Management (13). These four total 88 of the 120. Only four originally named IAS option IAS options. It may be possible to interpret these data as distinguishing between those who come to UWB for a particular program of study and those for whom the program is not the major draw.

*c. Naming*

Follow-up questions were included to determine whether names mattered to students for several of these fields.

*Sciences:* In Biology and Health Sciences, substantially more students were attracted by the name Health Sciences. Pre-health Professions was a relatively close follow-up. Biology did not appear to have a substantial independent draw.

*Planning and Design:* Among 22 student indicating architectural and planning fields, the preference was for Architecture and Interior Design. Almost of this demand came from Bellevue, and likely corresponds with their interior design program.

*Law and Policy:* Follow-up questions to 26 students choosing policy or law produced a virtual tie between Law, Politics and Economics and Law and Social Justice. The former name received slightly fewer extreme negatives, while the later had slightly more positive responses. While the name law and social justice was field tested across all schools, it was not included in the prior questioning about possible majors except in Bellevue. In previously polled colleges the name for public policy and or political economy varied slightly.

*Arts:* Among the 17 students indicating a preference for Creative Arts or Interdisciplinary Arts were relatively small and when those names were field test with others, there was little difference among the two, and only fine arts, among the other field tested names, received any substantial interests.