

Executive Summary of Freshmen Survey – Honors (Fall 2011)

- Respondents = 83
- 14.5% indicated they were “Undeclared”, no other major had a significant amount
- 79.5% female and 97.6% white/Caucasian
- Geographic origin: 37.4% - SW MO, 19.3% - St. Louis area, 18.1% - KC area, 16.9% other MO, 8.4% other states/countries
- 67.5% decided to attend MSU during their senior year, while 28.9% decided before their senior year.
- Main reasons for attending given (question was open ended, and some students gave multiple reasons)
 - o Friendly/”Fit”/good size (not too big/not too small) – 31
 - o Scholarship – 27
 - o Quality/Major – 23
 - o Close to home – 19
 - o Affordable – 16
 - o Springfield – 9
 - o Close enough to home, but still far away – 9
 - o No other responses had more than 5
- Biggest alternate choice school was Mizzou (18), followed by Truman St, Drury and UCM (6 each)
- Students were asked how important certain characteristics were in choosing a college and then asked to rank how we compared to their first alternate choice school. Below is a brief overview of the top 6 (others received 62% or below on “importance” scale):

Characteristic	Extremely Imp./Important	Better at MSU	About the same at both
Scholarships	96.1%	63.6%	15.6%
Quality of Major	93.5%	49.4%	28.6%
Cost	92.2%	65.0%	14.3%
Academic Reputation	81.8%	31.1%	35.1%
Grads get good jobs	79.2%	18.2%	53.3%
Safety	75.3%	26.1%	55.8%

- o **Observation: We do very well in terms of scholarships and cost compared to our competition, but the perception that our majors, academic reputation and our grads get good jobs could improve if we wish to continue to attract quality students (Honors-level).**
- o **When we look only at students who indicated going to a school that could be perceived as “prestigious, or having high academic quality”, 39.6% of those students thought MSU was better, while 40.7% thought MSU was as good as the alt. school.**
- The most important sources of information in the college search process were (as indicated by selecting them as “extremely important” and “important”):

Scholarship and Financial Aid brochure	90.0%
Campus visit	72.5%
MSU website	72.5%
Academic/department information	57.5%
Viewbook	50.0%
Microsite (online viewbook)	46.3%
- o **Observation: The key difference between the Honors and non-Honors is that the Scholarship and FinAid brochure was less important to the non-Honors and the academic/department info and viewbook were of much greater importance. Neither group found items such as Twitter, Facebook, iTunes, or the YouTube channel of great importance.**

- Online search services used by students included the College Board (33.8%), Cappex and Zinch (13.8% each). The majority (56.3%), though, did not use an online college search engine.
- All but two of the students who filled out the survey received at least one scholarship from MSU (a large percentage received the Presidential, BOG or MLS)
 - o 60.6% said the MSU scholarship offer was better than what they received from their alternate choice school, while 19.7% said it was similar
 - o 23.7% said they were either very or moderately likely to attend MSU without the scholarship, while 54.0% said they were very or moderately unlikely to attend without it.
- Overall impression of Admissions, Financial Aid and Housing staff was favorable
- 70.5% had an official visit coordinated through the Office of Admissions, with 90.9% indicating they were very or moderately satisfied with the visit and 9.1% neutral.
- Only 37.2% were aware of Missouri State's Public Affairs missions during the college search process (slightly higher than non-Honors, which was 30.6%)
 - o Only 10.3% indicated it was one of the main factors for choosing MSU (up from 3%), while 31.0% didn't consider it a main reason, but the mission was important to them (decrease from 41.5%).
- 91.0% indicated they were able to find what they were looking for when searching on our website
 - o 38.6% felt our website was much or slightly better than their alternate choice school, and 52.6% felt it was about the same.
- 61.5% felt the availability of the Honors College at MSU was a factor in their decision to attend MSU, with 26.9% neutral
 - o Overall, students were very positive about the information they have received from the Honors College
 - o Only 25.6% felt MSU's Honors College was better than other schools they considered, while 48.7% neither agreed nor disagreed.
 - o Early registration remains the most popular benefit of the Honors College (no surprise), with 89.2% considering it extremely or very important. Both the "enriched environment in the classroom" (78.2%) and the "smaller community of scholars within the larger university" (75.7%) were popular, while the opportunity to live in the Honors College residences only garnered 37.2% as extremely or very important.
- General comments about the Honors College had two main themes:
 - 1) The faculty and staff are awesome, caring, impressive and committed
 - 2) The Honors requirements don't always work well for today's students who bring in a great deal of dual enrollment and AP credit. Many commented that earning "Honors" will require them to take extra un-needed gen ed classes, and possibly extend their stay by a semester.

Observation: 54.5% of our student brought in at least some college credit, with the "average" of those students bringing in 13 credit hours. It would reason that the best and brightest (i.e. Honors) would be "better" than average. If we wish to continue to recruit the most talented of students, we need to find a way to adapt our Honors criteria to meet the needs of today's students.

- Students were asked about especially positive experiences with MSU. In general, most commented on a professor who has made a big impression on them, many also noted how friendly everyone has been (faculty, staff and students). There were also several positive comments about SOAR.
- Students were also asked about particularly frustrating or disappointing experiences prior to enrolling. Only 10 students commented, and there were no "common" themes.