

Executive Summary of Freshmen Survey – Non-Honors (Fall 2011)

- Respondents = 244
- 24.2% indicated they were “Undeclared”, the next highest were Nursing (10.7%) and Elementary Ed (4.1%)
- 79.5% were female and 89.2% white/Caucasian
- Geographic origin: 36.9% - St. Louis area, 24.2% - SW MO, 12.7% - KC area, 20.5% other MO, 5.7% other states/countries
- 59.0% decided to attend MSU during their senior year, with 34.0% deciding before the senior year
- Main reasons for attending given (question was open ended, and some students gave multiple reasons)

Friendly/good “fit”/good size – 113	Quality/Major – 92
Affordable – 51	Close to home – 39
Close enough to home, but still far away – 32	Springfield – 19
Family who are alumni – 15	Scholarship – 10
Band/Athletics/other extracurricular options – 9	
- Biggest alternate choice school was Mizzou (46), followed by Truman St. (12), UCM and Northwest MO (11), OTC (10), SEMO (9), UMKC & Lindenwood (8), and Drury & SLU (7)
 - o Didn’t apply to any other school (22)
- 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 60% or below on “importance” scale):

Characteristic	Extremely Imp./Important	Better at MSU	About the same at both
Quality of Major	87.7%	56.9%	23.7%
Cost	87.7%	64.9%	13.7%
Grads get good jobs	86.3%	37.0%	44.1%
Academic Reputation	81.5%	43.6%	31.3%
Financial Aid & Scholarships	78.2%	43.1%	26.5%
Safety	76.3%	45.5%	43.1%

- o **Observation: The perception of our majors, academic reputation and our grads getting good jobs is an area we should focus attention on improving if we wish to continue to attract quality students. Our average student had a 3.60 high school GPA and a 24.1 on the ACT. These students have plenty of options. If we can improve the perception of our “quality” compared to our competition, we could see gains in enrollment.**
- o **When we only look at students whose alternate choice school would be considered “prestigious”, we see that only 47.1% see our quality as better and 27.5% as equal (74.6% combined compared to 80.6% for the overall). And, as far as academic reputation, only 29.5% see MSU as better and 27.5% as the same (57.0% combined, compared with 74.9% for the overall).**
- 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	77.2%
Campus visit	76.3%
Academic/department information	72.3%
MSU website	72.1%
Viewbook	61.6%
Online viewbook	57.2%

- **Observation: While the web continues to be extremely important in attracting students, several other sources jumped ahead of it in students' perceptions of importance during the search process. Neither group (Honors or Non-Honors) found items such as Twitter, Facebook, iTunes, or the YouTube channel of great importance.**
- 49.7% thought customizable web pages would have been helpful in the college search process, and 42.9% thought text messages would have been helpful.
- Online search services used by students included the College Board (20.1%), Cappex (15.2%) and Zinch (9.4% each). Close to a majority (43.7%), though, did not use an online college search engine.
- 39.6% indicated they have received a scholarship (the largest groups were the Provost and Deans').
 - 34.6% said the MSU scholarship offer was better than what they received from their alternate choice school, while 18.5% said it was similar (22.2% didn't receive a scholarship offer from their alternate school).
 - 58.1% said they were either very or moderately likely to attend MSU without the scholarship, while 24.5% said they were very or moderately unlikely to attend without it.
- Overall impression of Admissions, Financial Aid and Housing was very good or good:
- 65.3% had an official visit coordinated through the Office of Admissions, with 95.1% indicating they were very or moderately satisfied with the visit and 4.9% neutral.
- Only 30.6% were aware of Missouri State's Public Affairs missions during the college search process
 - Only 7.5% indicated it was one of the main factors for choosing MSU, while 37.3% didn't consider it a main reason, but the mission was important to them.
 - These numbers are fairly similar to the Honors students
- 21.9% said their parents were very involved in the college search and selection process, while 32.0 said their parents were involved, 30.1 slightly involved and 16.0 not involved at all.
- 89.0% indicated they were able to find what they were looking for when searching on our website
 - 59.6% felt our website was much or slightly better than their alternate choice school, and 33.9 felt it was about the same.
 - When asked how we could improve our website, the overwhelming response was "I don't know/it is already easy to use."
- Students were asked about especially positive experiences with MSU.
 - The majority of comments regarded the friendliness of those they encountered here at MSU (faculty, staff and students).
 - Several specific comments were made about Residence Life staff (many about their RA's), Financial Aid, SOAR, Adult Student Services and the Pride Band.
- Students were also asked about particularly frustrating or disappointing experiences prior to enrolling.
 - Many commented on frustrating experiences with Financial Aid (verification process, not receiving enough aid, customer service, missing deadlines)
 - A couple of comments about SOAR (registration issues)
 - A couple of comments about transfer credit evaluations (from dual credit courses)