

## 2018 Incoming Freshmen Survey: Highlights

NC State conducted its annual survey of incoming freshmen prior to and at the beginning of the Fall 2018 semester. Eligible students included all incoming NC State freshmen at the beginning of the Fall 2018 semester. Of the 4,845 eligible incoming freshmen, 2,884 returned usable surveys for a response rate of 59.3%.

**NC State's academic reputation is very influential in students' decisions to attend.** Although almost 85 percent of respondents applied to three or more colleges, including NC State, a majority of incoming students said that NC State was their first or only choice of colleges to attend. *Academic reputation* was most frequently reported as the single most influential factor in the decision to attend NC State, with nearly one-fourth of incoming freshmen reporting this, followed by *availability of program* and *level of support for my intended major*.

**High achievement is important to incoming students.** Half of incoming students said their primary goal or objective for attending NC State is "to obtain a bachelor's degree as preparation for graduate school," while over 45 percent said it was "to obtain a bachelor's degree in preparation for a career." Two-thirds of respondents said that they plan to pursue a master's, doctoral, or professional degree.

**Students feel well prepared for college by their high school and by their own efforts.** Over 90 percent of incoming students said they were at least "somewhat well" prepared for college by both their high school and by their own efforts, with nearly half saying that they were "very well" prepared for college by both their high school and by their own efforts.

**Incoming students report room to grow on various general education, personal development, and world view goals.** Respondents consistently gave higher ratings to the importance of each of the 45 different general education, personal development, and world view goals asked about than to their current level of development of them. However, goals ranked relatively high in current level of development compared to other goals were similarly ranked high relative to other goals in terms of their importance as well. There were some exceptions, most notably for *time management*, *speaking effectively*, and *ability to manage ongoing stressors* which were viewed as "very important" but ranked low in terms of development. Goals ranking high in both development and importance include *ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds*, *taking responsibility for my own behavior*, *working effectively as part of a team*, *listening attentively*, and *experiencing personal growth*.

**Students report using various sources, including their own money, to pay for their college expenses.** Over one-third of incoming students reported that they will be contributing at least \$1,000 of their own resources to their first year education expenses at NC State, with about five percent contributing at least \$6,000. Less than half of respondents said that they will be taking out loans that must be repaid; however, nearly 15 percent said they would be taking out loans of at least \$10,000 to help cover their first year educational expenses. A slight majority reported that they intend to work either on or off campus during their first year at NC State.

**Various NC State services given high marks by incoming freshmen.** Incoming freshmen gave high ratings to the NC State admissions process, with 96 percent saying they were at least “moderately satisfied” and 54 percent saying they were “very satisfied,” and 85 percent gave a rating of “excellent” or “good” to the NC State admissions website. Over 80 percent of incoming students gave a positive rating to the NC State academic services website, with nearly 25 percent saying the academic services website was “excellent.” More than 80 percent of respondents also said they were at least “moderately” satisfied with the NC State financial aid process.

**Incoming students agree that New Student Orientation was useful in preparing to begin college at NC State.** Over 85 percent of incoming students said they were satisfied with the attention they received from their college/department, the information/advice to plan their schedule, and the time spent with their college/department during New Student Orientation. Seventy percent of respondents “strongly agree” that as a result of their participation in New Student Orientation they were excited to start their first-semester at NC State.

**Anticipated experiences both excite and concern incoming students.** In response to two questions asking them to comment in their own words – one about what they are excited about in coming to NC State, and one about what they are concerned with - students expressed similar issues in their responses to both questions. Students were most likely to say that they were most excited about things pertaining to social life, learning, the intellectual environment, adapting to NC State, campus life, independence, opportunities, and career planning at NC State. Similarly, students were most likely to say that issues they were nervous about in coming to NC State included their academic performance, adapting to NC State, social life, independence, and time management.

For more information on the 2018 Incoming Freshmen Survey, contact:

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