

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

2024 Incoming First-Year Student Survey Overall Results

Introduction

This overview report presents findings from all incoming first-year students participating in the 2024 Incoming First-Year Student Survey. In the survey, students are asked about their experiences with the application process and deciding to enroll at NC State; their satisfaction with various NC State services and programs; how they are paying for their education; their preparation for college and their educational goals; what they are excited and concerned about in starting their first year of college; and for a variety of demographic information. For an overview of survey methods, a copy of the survey instrument with exact question wording, response rates, and a dashboard with breakouts by college, see [“2024 Incoming First-Year Student Survey: Table of Contents.”](#)

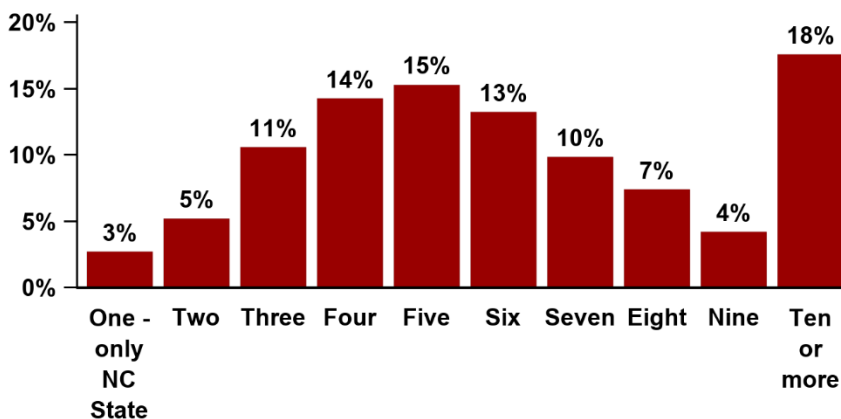
Incoming first-year students participated in New Student Orientation over the summer before their first semester at NC State. After they completed orientation, they were invited to participate in the 2024 Incoming First-Year Student Survey. The survey closed on September 4, 2024, about three weeks after classes began. A total of 5,718 incoming first-year students enrolled in a four-year degree-seeking program at the time of census were eligible to complete the survey and have their responses included in final analyses; 3,135 eligible students participated in the survey for a response rate of 55%.

Experiences Prior to Enrolling at NC State

Number of Colleges/Universities Applied to, Including NC State (Figure 1)

Incoming first-year students were first asked how many colleges/universities they applied to for admission, including NC State. Four-fifths of respondents reported that they had applied to four or more colleges/universities, including NC State, with 18% applying to ten or more. Three percent reported that NC State was the only school to which they applied. First-year students applied to an average of 6 colleges/universities.

Figure 1 - Number of Colleges/Universities Applied to, Including NC State (N=3,135)



NC State as First Choice of Colleges to Attend (Table 1)

Over 60% of incoming first-year students said that NC State was their top choice college to attend (61.4%). However, one-in-ten enrolled first-year students said that NC State was their third choice or below of colleges to attend (10.0%).

The College of Education (75.9%), College of Design (72.7%) and College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (71.5%) had the highest percentages of respondents saying that NC State was either their “only” or “first choice” university to attend. The College of Sciences (13.2%), the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (12.2%), the College of Engineering (11.5%), and the Wilson College of Textiles (11.3%) were most likely to have respondents report NC State was their third choice or below.

Table 1 - NC State First Choice of Colleges to Attend, by College

College	NC State first choice of colleges to attend				N
	It was my only choice	Yes - it was my first choice	No - it was my second choice	No - it was my third choice or below	
Agriculture & Life Sciences	2.1%	69.4%	20.5%	8.0%	327
Design	3.0%	69.7%	21.2%	6.1%	66
Education	2.4%	73.5%	20.5%	3.6%	83
Engineering	3.6%	62.0%	22.9%	11.5%	965
Natural Resources	0.9%	64.6%	27.4%	7.1%	113
Humanities & Social Sciences	1.4%	42.7%	43.7%	12.2%	286
Sciences	0.9%	48.9%	37.0%	13.2%	438
Textiles	4.8%	62.9%	21.0%	11.3%	62
Management	1.4%	52.8%	37.5%	8.3%	288
University College	3.1%	62.9%	27.4%	6.6%	423
Total	2.5%	58.9%	28.6%	10.0%	3,051

Factors That Influenced Decision to Attend NC State (Tables 2-4)

Incoming first-year students were asked to identify what the single most influential factor in their decision to attend NC State was, as well as the extent to which each of the potential factors asked about influenced their decision. A majority of incoming first-year students focused on just a few specific factors as being the most important in deciding to attend NC State. *Academic reputation* (17.4%) was most likely to be reported as being the *single most influential factor* in deciding to attend NC State, followed by *availability of academic program/major* (15.6%), *future career opportunities* (14.5%) and *level of support for my intended major* (13.6%). *Location* (8.9%) and *cost* (6.6%) were also rated as the *single most influential factor* by a sizable number of students. Fewer than five percent selected any one of the other factors asked about as being most influential in their decision.

Table 2 - Single Most Influential Factor in Deciding to Attend NC State

	%	N
Academic reputation	17.4%	531
Availability of academic program/major	15.6%	477
Future career opportunities	14.5%	441
Level of support for my intended major	13.6%	416
Location	8.9%	270
Cost	6.6%	202
Recommended by a friend, family member, teacher, counselor, etc.	4.2%	127
Facilities and resources available	3.3%	100
Campus visit/recruitment event(s)	2.6%	78
Financial aid available	2.5%	76
Acceptance into University College - Exploratory Studies	2.5%	75
Scholarships available	2.1%	65
Extracurricular opportunities	2.0%	62
NC State's commitment to the environment and sustainability	0.6%	18
Wellness and Recreation facilities and programs	0.5%	15
Attendance at a college fair or high school visit	0.4%	11
Library spaces and services	0.2%	5
Other	2.6%	80
Total	100.0%	3,049

When asked to rate how much of an influence each factor had on them using a scale from 1 (“very weak influence”) to 5 (“very strong influence”), it is clear that a wide variety of factors had at least some influence on their decision, despite a plurality of students selecting a relatively few factors as being the single most influential factor. Incoming students were most likely to say that *availability of academic program* (48.2%), *future career opportunities* (43.7%), *academic reputation* (35.4%), and *level of support for intended major* (34.0%) had a “very strong influence” on their decision to attend NC State. Incoming first-year students also reported *location* (32.2%) and *facilities and resources available* (31.7%) as having high levels of influence on their decision.

Among the factors least likely to be influential in students’ decisions to attend NC State, with 30 percent or more of students saying each had either a “weak” or “very weak” influence. were *financial aid available* (40.2%), *scholarships available* (37.0%), and *attendance at a college fair or high school visit* (33.5%). A relatively small number of respondents (N=256) identified their own *other* factors not included on the list provided as having influenced their decision to attend NC State. Some examples of *other* factors that students mentioned included their family are NC State alumni, proximity to their hometown, sporting events, and friends.

Table 3 - Influence of Various Factors on Decision to Attend NC State

	Mean	5: Very strong influence	4: Strong influence	3: Moderate influence	2: Weak influence	1: Very weak influence	N
Availability of academic program	4.23	48.2%	32.5%	14.7%	3.3%	1.3%	3,103
Future career opportunities	4.20	43.7%	36.7%	16.0%	2.8%	0.8%	3,102
Academic reputation	4.18	35.4%	48.9%	14.3%	1.2%	0.2%	3,120
Facilities and resources available	4.01	31.7%	42.8%	21.0%	3.6%	0.8%	3,069
Level of support for intended major	4.00	34.0%	38.7%	22.1%	3.8%	1.4%	3,038
Location	3.93	32.2%	38.5%	21.7%	5.5%	2.1%	3,093
Extracurricular opportunities	3.47	17.9%	32.2%	33.3%	12.3%	4.4%	3,018
Recommended by a friend, family member, teacher, counselor, etc.	3.45	22.0%	26.4%	32.7%	12.7%	6.2%	2,939
Cost	3.39	19.3%	26.0%	35.2%	13.6%	5.9%	3,040
Library spaces and services	3.36	13.5%	31.2%	37.5%	13.4%	4.5%	3,011
Wellness and Recreation facilities and programs	3.29	13.6%	29.7%	35.5%	14.9%	6.3%	2,954
NC State's commitment to the environment and sustainability	3.23	14.4%	27.1%	33.9%	15.9%	8.6%	2,981
Campus visit/recruitment event(s)	3.18	13.7%	26.4%	33.5%	16.9%	9.5%	2,881
Acceptance into University College - Exploratory Studies	3.02	17.4%	19.1%	29.1%	17.4%	17.0%	1,875
Attendance at college fair or visit	3.01	11.5%	23.7%	31.2%	21.1%	12.4%	2,582
Scholarships available	2.94	12.8%	17.4%	32.9%	25.1%	11.9%	2,891
Financial aid available	2.94	16.1%	17.0%	26.8%	25.0%	15.2%	2,776
Other	3.81	48.8%	19.1%	12.9%	2.7%	16.4%	256

Table 4 provides results for only students who were enrolled in Exploratory Studies at the time of the University's census. More than three-fourths of those enrolled in Exploratory Studies said their acceptance in the program had either a "very strong" (50.0%), or "strong influence" (26.9%) on their decision to attend NC State.

Table 4 - Influence of Acceptance into Exploratory Studies on Decision to Attend NC State (among those enrolled in Exploratory Studies at the beginning of the Fall 2024 semester)

	%	N
Very strong influence	50.0%	210
Strong influence	26.9%	113
Moderate influence	16.2%	68
Weak influence	4.0%	17
Very weak influence	2.9%	12
Total	100.0%	420

Satisfaction with NC State Admissions Process (Table 5)

Incoming first-year students were asked to reflect back to when they applied for admission to NC State and rate their *satisfaction with the NC State University admissions process*. Almost all respondents were satisfied (96.5%), with equal numbers saying they were “very satisfied” (48.2%) and “moderately satisfied” (48.3%) with the NC State admissions process.

Table 5 - Satisfaction with Admissions Process (excluding those who responded 'Don't know')

	%	N
Very satisfied	48.2%	1,460
Moderately satisfied	48.3%	1,461
Moderately dissatisfied	3.1%	95
Very dissatisfied	0.3%	10
Total	100.0%	3,026

Personal, Educational, and Career Goals

Primary Goal/Objective for Attending NC State (Table 6)

When asked to report what their primary goal or objective was for attending NC State, more than half of respondents said it was to earn a “bachelor’s degree in preparation for a career” (54.6%), while 40% said it was to earn a “bachelor’s degree as preparation for graduate or professional school” (40.1%).

Table 6 - Primary Goal/Objective for Attending NC State

	%	N
Bachelor’s degree in preparation for career	54.6%	1,633
Bachelor’s degree for grad school preparation	40.1%	1,200
Bachelor’s degree for career change preparation	0.5%	15
Improve knowledge/skills for current profession	3.3%	99
Take courses for personal interest	0.6%	19
Other	0.9%	26
Total	100.0%	2,992

Time Anticipated to Complete Bachelor’s Degree (Table 7)

Incoming first-year students were also asked to estimate the amount of time they intended to take to earn their bachelor’s degree at NC State. While close to three-fourths said they expect to graduate from NC State in four years (72.8%), more than 20% indicated that they would complete their bachelor’s degree in less than four years (23.1%).

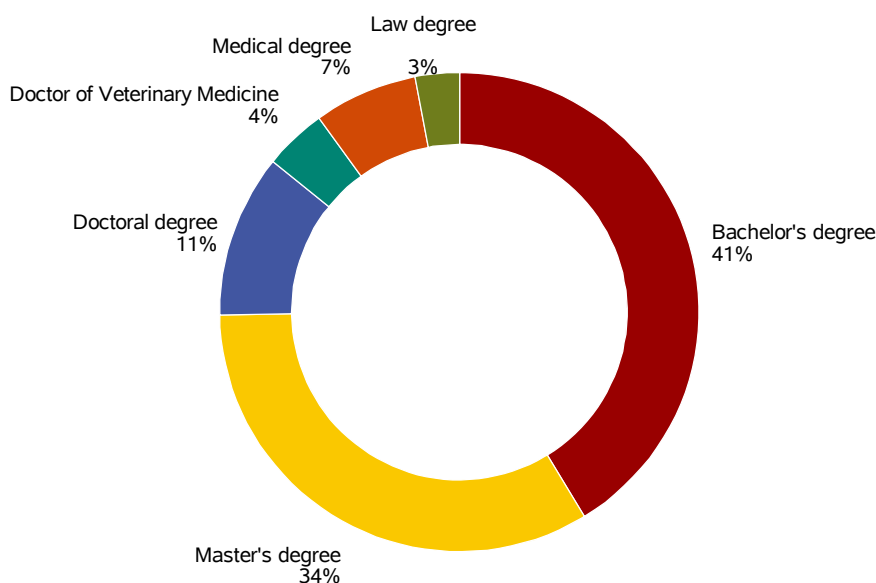
Table 7 - Time Anticipated to Complete Bachelor's Degree

	%	N
Less than 4 years	23.1%	597
4 years	72.8%	1,883
4 1/2 years	1.9%	50
5 years	1.5%	40
5 1/2 years	0.2%	5
6 or more years	0.2%	4
Do not intend to complete bachelor's degree at NC State	0.2%	6
Total	100.0%	2,585

Highest Level of Education Anticipated to Complete (Figure 2)

Almost 60 percent of respondents reported that they intended to earn a degree beyond a bachelor's degree (59%), with one-fourth of all respondents reporting they plan to pursue a doctoral or professional degree (25%).

Figure 2 - Highest Level of Education Anticipate Completing (among those intending on completing a degree) (N=2,618)



Certainty of College Major (Table 8)

More than three-fourths of incoming first-year students reported that they were either “very certain” (34.3%) or “certain” (44.9%) in their choice of college major. Levels of certainty, however, varied by college. Students in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and College of Design were most likely to report feeling “very certain” about their choice of college major (46.7% and 43.9%, respectively). Students in University College, where students enter the Exploratory Studies program without a declared major, were the most likely to report being uncertain, with over half saying they were “very uncertain” (11.3%) or “uncertain” (44.5%) about their major. Aside from University College

students, those entering in the College of Natural Resources were the most likely to report being either “uncertain” (24.5%) or “very uncertain” (6.4%) in their choice of college major.

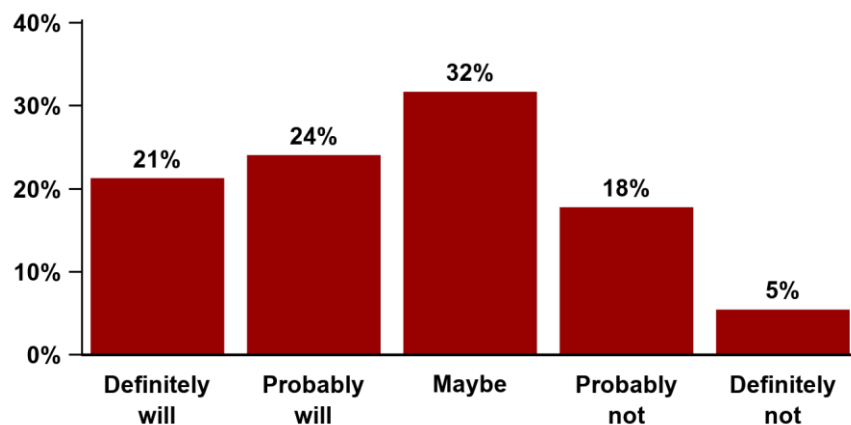
Table 8 - Certainty of Academic Major, by College

College	Certainty of college major choice				N
	Very certain	Certain	Uncertain	Very uncertain	
Agriculture & Life Sciences	46.7%	38.3%	13.4%	1.6%	321
Design	43.9%	42.4%	12.1%	1.5%	66
Education	39.5%	45.7%	12.3%	2.5%	81
Engineering	37.1%	51.5%	10.7%	0.7%	947
Natural Resources	31.8%	37.3%	24.5%	6.4%	110
Humanities & Social Sciences	33.7%	46.5%	16.0%	3.9%	282
Sciences	39.1%	44.3%	15.2%	1.4%	427
Textiles	33.3%	53.3%	10.0%	3.3%	60
Management	31.3%	53.4%	14.2%	1.1%	281
University College	14.4%	29.8%	44.5%	11.3%	416
Total	34.3%	44.9%	17.7%	3.0%	2,991

Likelihood of Participation in Abroad Program (Figure 3)

A little over three-quarters of incoming first-year students reported that it was at least somewhat likely they would participate in a Study Abroad program while an undergraduate student at NC State, with 45% saying they either “definitely” (21%), or “probably will” (24%) participate. Just 5% said they would “definitely not” participate in a Study Abroad program while an undergraduate student at NC State.

Figure 3 - Likelihood of Study Abroad Program Participation (N=2,595)



Intended Employment Location after Graduation (Table 9)

When asked to indicate the general location in which they intend to seek employment after graduation, a little over 20 percent reported that they will be seeking work “in North Carolina only” (21.3%), close to half said that they would seek work “anywhere in the USA” (48.9%) and one percent said that they

would seek work “outside the USA only” (0.8%). The remainder said that they would seek work “anywhere – location is not important” (29.0%).

Table 9 - Intended Employment Location After Graduation (among those planning on seeking employment)

	%	N
In North Carolina only	21.3%	469
Anywhere in USA	48.9%	1,078
Outside USA only	0.8%	18
Anywhere - location is not important	29.0%	638
Total	100.0%	2,203

Development and Importance of Goals Held by NC State (Tables 10-14)

Incoming first-year students were asked to what extent they had already acquired a number of skills related to goals that NC State holds for its incoming students, and how important each of those goals were to them. Overall, students believe each of these specific skills to be important, and although ratings for their current level of development were consistently lower than ratings for their importance of given skills, they felt they did a good job developing many of them before starting college.

Average ratings of students’ current level of development for the 28 goals asked about range from a high of 3.33 (*Taking responsibility for my own behavior*) to a low of 2.58 (*Time management*) (on a 4-point scale). While few incoming first-year students indicated that their current level of development for any of the goals was “poor,” one-third or more reported that their current level of development was “excellent” for only 4 of the 28 goals asked about.

Average ratings for the importance of the 28 individual goals asked about range from a high of 3.84 (*Time management*) to a low of 2.78 (*Engaging with and responding to artistic works*) (on a 4-point scale). At least half of respondents rated all but seven of the goals asked about as “very important,” and for only one of those seven goals did more than 5% of respondents say it was “not at all important” to them.

General Education Goals

Overall, respondents reported that they felt well prepared with respect to various general education areas prior to coming to campus. The majority of incoming students rated their current level of development for each of the 14 general education goals asked as “excellent” or “good” and three-fourths or more gave themselves such a rating for seven of them. They were most likely to say that their current level of development was “excellent” for:

- *Ability to plan and carry out projects* (37.2% “excellent”)
- *Considering options and their consequences when solving a problem or addressing an issue* (32.4%)
- *Appreciating the humanities* (27.9%)
- *Keeping personal data and devices secure* (27.6%)
- *Ability to make judgements and draw conclusions based on quantitative data analysis* (27.4%)
- *Reflecting on learning in and out of the classroom* (27.0%)
- *Identifying a problem/concept and articulating its components* (26.5%)

Conversely, one-third or more of incoming first-year students rated their current level of development on seven of the 14 general education goals asked about as “fair” or “poor.”

- *Engaging with and responding to artistic works* (41.3%)
- *Seeking out new, untested solutions to real world problems* (40.9%)
- *Applying social science methods to understand human behavior* (35.7%)
- *Advanced use of technology* (35.0%)
- *Applying scientific methods of inquiry* (33.4%)

Table 10 - Current Level of Development of General Education Goals

	Mean	4: Excellent	3: Good	2: Fair	1: Poor	N
Development: Ability to plan and carry out projects independently	3.21	37.2%	48.3%	12.9%	1.5%	2,905
Development: Considering options and their consequences when solving a problem or addressing an issue	3.19	32.4%	54.5%	12.6%	0.6%	2,882
Development: Ability to make judgements and draw conclusions based on quantitative data analysis	3.08	27.4%	53.8%	17.7%	1.0%	2,911
Development: Identifying a problem/concept and articulating its components	3.05	26.5%	52.9%	19.7%	1.0%	2,900
Development: Effectively analyzing and evaluating evidence/arguments/claims/beliefs	3.02	23.9%	54.9%	20.0%	1.2%	2,873
Development: Keeping personal data and devices secure	3.01	27.6%	48.8%	20.3%	3.2%	2,848
Development: Reflecting on learning in and out of the classroom	3.01	27.0%	48.7%	22.1%	2.2%	2,868
Development: Appreciating the humanities	2.96	27.9%	45.2%	21.9%	5.0%	2,821
Development: Communicating information and knowledge using multiple forms	2.94	23.8%	49.1%	24.7%	2.3%	2,911
Development: Applying scientific methods of inquiry	2.81	19.4%	47.3%	28.7%	4.7%	2,869
Development: Advanced use of technology	2.79	20.2%	44.8%	28.8%	6.2%	2,890
Development: Applying social science methods to understand human behavior	2.77	18.4%	45.8%	29.9%	5.8%	2,738
Development: Engaging with and responding to artistic works	2.69	23.5%	35.2%	27.8%	13.5%	2,823
Development: Seeking out new, untested solutions to real world problems	2.68	15.1%	43.9%	35.0%	5.9%	2,816

Incoming first-year students on average rated their importance of the general education goals asked about higher than their current level of development on them. A majority of respondents rated each of the 14 goals as either “very” or “moderately important,” with 90% or more giving such a rating to 11 of the goals. They were most likely to see the following goals as “very important”:

- *Ability to plan and carry out projects* (72.2% “very important”)
- *Considering options and their consequences when solving a problem or addressing an issue* (71.4%)
- *Identifying a problem/concept and articulating its components* (69.6%)
- *Keeping personal data and devices secure* (67.2%)
- *Ability to make judgements and draw conclusions based on quantitative data analysis* (66.5%)

At least 10% of incoming students, however, see several of the general education goals as about as either “not very” or “not at all important.” Those goals seen by these respondents as least important are:

- *Engaging with and responding to artistic works* (36.8% “not very important” or “not at all important”)
- *Appreciating the humanities* (20.0%)
- *Applying social science methods to understand human behavior* (17.4%)
- *Applying scientific methods of inquiry* (12.2%)

Table 11 - Importance of General Education Goals

	Mean	4: Very important	3: Somewhat important	2: Not very important	1: Not at all important	N
Importance: Ability to plan and carry out projects independently	3.69	72.2%	25.2%	2.5%	0.2%	2,814
Importance: Considering options and their consequences when solving a problem or addressing an issue	3.69	71.4%	26.4%	2.0%	0.2%	2,803
Importance: Identifying a problem/concept and articulating its components	3.67	69.6%	27.9%	2.2%	0.3%	2,809
Importance: Ability to make judgements and draw conclusions based on quantitative data analysis	3.63	66.5%	30.0%	3.1%	0.3%	2,812
Importance: Keeping personal data and devices secure	3.62	67.2%	28.1%	4.2%	0.5%	2,796
Importance: Effectively analyzing and evaluating evidence/arguments/claims/beliefs	3.55	59.5%	36.4%	3.7%	0.4%	2,803
Importance: Seeking out new, untested solutions to real world problems	3.50	56.4%	37.8%	5.2%	0.6%	2,790
Importance: Advanced use of technology	3.46	53.1%	40.4%	6.0%	0.5%	2,807
Importance: Communicating information and knowledge using multiple forms	3.46	52.8%	40.6%	6.0%	0.6%	2,817
Importance: Reflecting on learning in and out of the classroom	3.43	53.1%	38.3%	7.6%	1.0%	2,785
Importance: Applying scientific methods of inquiry	3.33	46.1%	41.7%	10.8%	1.4%	2,784
Importance: Applying social science methods to understand human behavior	3.16	35.6%	47.0%	14.9%	2.5%	2,751
Importance: Appreciating the humanities	3.12	35.4%	44.7%	16.1%	3.9%	2,753
Importance: Engaging with and responding to artistic works	2.78	23.5%	39.7%	27.7%	9.1%	2,786

Personal Development Goals

At least half of respondents gave a rating of “excellent” or “good” to their current level of development for each of the 14 personal development goals asked about, with 75% or more doing so for 8 of the goals. They were most likely to say that their current level of development was “excellent” for:

- *Taking responsibility for my own behavior* (42.3% “excellent”)
- *Working effectively as part of a team* (37.7%)
- *Seeing projects through to completion* (35.3%)
- *Recognizing and acting on ethical principles* (31.5%)

One-fourth or more of incoming students rated their current level of development on 6 of the 14 personal development goals as only “fair” or “poor.” They were most likely to give such a rating for their development of:

- *Time management* (45.8% “fair” or “poor”)
- *Ability to manage ongoing stressors* (41.5%)
- *Being involved in public and community affairs* (36.4%)
- *Recovering from emotional setbacks* (33.2%)

Table 12 - Current Level of Development of Personal Development Goals

	Mean	4: Excellent	3: Good	2: Fair	1: Poor	N
Development: Taking responsibility for own behavior	3.33	42.3%	49.1%	7.9%	0.8%	2,737
Development: Working effectively as part of a team	3.26	37.7%	51.3%	10.0%	1.0%	2,753
Development: Recognizing and acting on ethical principles	3.17	31.5%	54.5%	13.3%	0.7%	2,741
Development: Seeing projects through to completion	3.16	35.3%	47.7%	14.9%	2.2%	2,732
Development: Ability to reflect upon academic goals and expectations and update as needed	3.08	27.3%	55.3%	15.7%	1.7%	2,732
Development: Ability to set and accomplish goals	3.07	27.9%	53.6%	16.3%	2.2%	2,733
Development: Identifying alternatives when faced with setbacks	3.02	25.0%	54.0%	18.7%	2.3%	2,731
Development: Developing leadership skills	3.02	28.2%	48.8%	19.2%	3.7%	2,762
Development: Developing and sustaining an active and healthy lifestyle	2.94	28.3%	43.2%	22.9%	5.5%	2,752
Development: Ability to reflect upon personal goals and expectations and update as needed	2.93	23.4%	50.0%	23.0%	3.6%	2,732
Development: Recovering from emotional setbacks	2.82	21.5%	45.3%	26.6%	6.6%	2,711
Development: Being involved in public and community affairs	2.76	20.0%	43.6%	28.7%	7.7%	2,736
Development: Ability to manage ongoing stressors	2.64	13.7%	44.8%	33.1%	8.4%	2,733
Development: Time management	2.58	15.0%	39.2%	34.0%	11.8%	2,746

The incoming first-year students see personal development goals as important, with a majority saying 13 of the 14 goals asked about are “very important.” Those goals seen as most important are:

- *Time management* (85.9% “very important”)
- *Taking responsibility for my own behavior* (80.8%)
- *Working effectively as part of a team* (78.8%)
- *Ability to set and accomplish goals* (78.5%)
- *Ability to manage ongoing stressors* (76.1%)
- *Seeking projects through to completion* (76.1%)

For only one of the personal development goals asked about did more than 5% of the incoming first-year students give a rating of “not very” or “not at all important.” The goal seen as least important to these students is

- *Being involved in public and community affairs* (9.7% “not very” or “not at all important”)

Table 13 - Importance of Personal Development Goals

	Mean	4: Very important	3: Somewhat important	2: Not very important	1: Not at all important	N
Importance: Time management	3.84	85.9%	12.9%	1.1%	0.1%	2,719
Importance: Taking responsibility for own behavior	3.79	80.8%	17.5%	1.5%	0.3%	2,718
Importance: Working effectively as part of a team	3.76	78.8%	19.1%	1.9%	0.2%	2,725
Importance: Ability to set and accomplish goals	3.76	78.5%	19.2%	2.2%	0.1%	2,711
Importance: Ability to manage ongoing stressors	3.74	76.1%	22.1%	1.5%	0.3%	2,717
Importance: Seeing projects through to completion	3.74	76.1%	21.9%	1.8%	0.3%	2,709
Importance: Identifying alternatives when faced with setbacks	3.72	74.5%	23.6%	1.7%	0.3%	2,709
Importance: Developing and sustaining an active and healthy lifestyle	3.71	74.2%	23.1%	2.4%	0.3%	2,719
Importance: Ability to reflect upon academic goals and expectations and update as needed	3.69	71.4%	26.4%	2.1%	0.1%	2,704
Importance: Recovering from emotional setbacks	3.66	70.4%	25.8%	3.2%	0.6%	2,682
Importance: Developing leadership skills	3.65	69.1%	27.3%	3.3%	0.3%	2,724
Importance: Ability to reflect upon personal goals and expectations and update as needed	3.64	67.5%	29.2%	3.0%	0.3%	2,707
Importance: Recognizing and acting on ethical principles	3.55	59.9%	35.5%	4.2%	0.5%	2,713
Importance: Being involved in public and community affairs	3.36	46.3%	44.1%	8.7%	1.0%	2,712

Current Level of Development Compared to Importance

Students were more likely to give a higher rating to the importance of a specific goal than to their current level of development of that goal. However, goals ranked relatively high in development also ranked relatively high in importance compared to other goals asked about. Table 14 provides a comparison between ratings of respondents' importance of skills and their current level of development of them. The goals listed in Table 14 are rank-ordered based on the perceived importance of the goal.

Goals that were rated relatively high in both importance and development (i.e. areas students have progressed well in before starting college and also feel that they are particularly important) include:

- *Taking responsibility for my own behavior* (2nd in importance [average rating 3.79] and 1st in development [average rating 3.33])
- *Working effectively as part of a team* (3rd [3.76] and 2nd [3.26])
- *Ability to set and accomplish goals* (4th [3.76] and 9th [3.07])
- *Seeing projects through to completion* (6th [3.74] and 6th [3.16])
- *Ability to plan and carry out projects independently* (9th [3.69] and 3rd [3.21])

Conversely, a few goals ranked low in both importance and development. These include:

- *Engaging with and responding to artistic works* (28th in importance [average rating 2.78] and 25th in development [average rating 2.69])
- *Applying social science methods to understand human behavior* (26th [3.16] and 23rd [2.77])
- *Applying scientific methods of inquiry* (25th [3.33] and 21st [2.81])
- *Being involved in public and community affairs* (24th [3.36] and 24th [2.76])

There are a few notable exceptions to goals having similar rankings. Some goals have an average importance rating that is relatively high compared to other goals but have an average current level of development that is relatively low in comparison. The “gap” between ratings of importance and development, goals in which incoming students felt were highly important but rated their current level of development as being among the lowest of all goals asked about, was largest for:

- *Time management* (1st in importance [average rating 3.84] vs 28th in development [average rating 2.58])
- *Ability to manage ongoing stressors* (5th [3.74] vs 27th [2.64])
- *Developing and sustaining an active and healthy lifestyle* (8th [3.71] vs 18th [2.94])

Conversely, some goals were rated as relatively less important than others, but incoming first-year students felt they were relatively better prepared on them. These include:

- *Recognizing and acting on ethical principles* (19th [3.55] vs 5th [3.17])
- *Appreciating the humanities* (27th [3.12] and 16th [2.96])

Table 14 - Relative Ranking of Current Level of Development and Importance of Goals

Goals	Importance Rank	Importance Mean	Development Rank	Development Mean
Time management	1	3.84	28	2.58
Taking responsibility for own behavior	2	3.79	1	3.33
Working effectively as part of a team	3	3.76	2	3.26
Ability to set and accomplish goals	4	3.76	9	3.07
Ability to manage ongoing stressors	5	3.74	27	2.64
Seeing projects through to completion	6	3.74	6	3.16
Identifying alternatives when faced with setbacks	7	3.72	11	3.02
Developing and sustaining an active and healthy lifestyle	8	3.71	18	2.94
Ability to plan and carry out projects independently	9	3.69	3	3.21
Ability to reflect upon academic goals and expectations and update as needed	10	3.69	7	3.08
Considering options and their consequences when solving a problem or addressing an issue	11	3.69	4	3.19
Identifying a problem/concept and articulating its components	12	3.67	10	3.05
Recovering from emotional setbacks	13	3.66	20	2.82
Developing leadership skills	14	3.65	13	3.02
Ability to reflect upon personal goals and expectations and update as needed	15	3.64	19	2.93
Ability to make judgements and draw conclusions based on quantitative data analysis	16	3.63	8	3.08
Keeping personal data and devices secure	17	3.62	14	3.01
Effectively analyzing and evaluating evidence/arguments/claims/beliefs	18	3.55	12	3.02
Recognizing and acting on ethical principles	19	3.55	5	3.17
Seeking out new, untested solutions to real world problems	20	3.50	26	2.68
Advanced use of technology	21	3.46	22	2.79
Communicating information and knowledge using multiple forms	22	3.46	17	2.94
Reflecting on learning in and out of the classroom	23	3.43	15	3.01
Being involved in public and community affairs	24	3.36	24	2.76
Applying scientific methods of inquiry	25	3.33	21	2.81
Applying social science methods to understand human behavior	26	3.16	23	2.77
Appreciating the humanities	27	3.12	16	2.96
Engaging with and responding to artistic works	28	2.78	25	2.69

Finances and Paying for College

This section of the report presents data on respondents’ sources of funding for college and their anticipated employment during their first year at NC State.

Financial Dependence (Table 15)

Almost 85 percent of first-year students reported that their parents or guardians will be covering half or more of their college expenses (84.2%), with 46% reporting that their parents will cover all of their expenses (e.g. tuition, fees, food, and housing) (46.0%). Ten percent of respondents reported that their parents or guardians will be paying for less than half of their expenses (9.7%), and 6% indicated that they will not be receiving any financial assistance from their parents (6.1%).

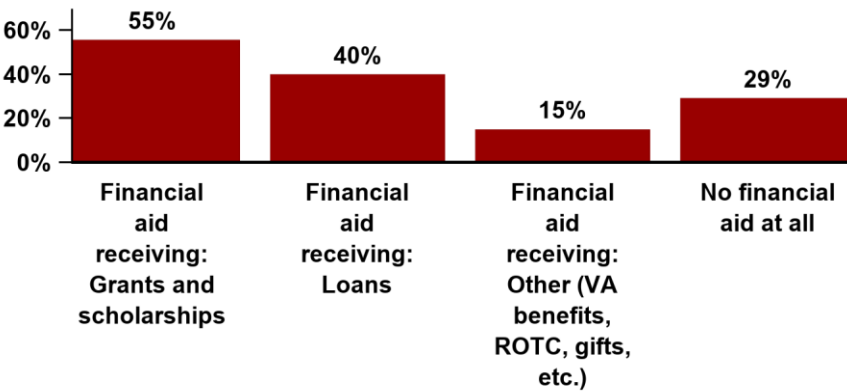
Table 15 - Financial Dependence Among Students

	%	N
Parents cover all expenses	46.0%	1,200
Parents cover half or more of expenses	38.2%	995
Parents cover less than half of expenses	9.7%	253
No financial assistance from parents	6.1%	159
Total	100.0%	2,607

Financial Aid Received (Figure 4)

When asked to identify what types of financial aid they had received, a majority of incoming first-year students said they were receiving grants and scholarships (55%), while 40 percent said that they received loans to help pay for their education. Fewer students reported they were receiving some other type of financial aid (15%). Just under 30% said they were not receiving financial aid of any kind (29%).

Figure 4 - Financial Aid Received (N=3,015)



*Note: Respondents could select more than one response

Paying for College (Table 16)

Incoming students were asked to estimate how much of their first-year educational expenses would come from various sources.¹ Half of respondents reported that \$10,000 or more of their first year educational expenses would come from *family resources* (50.2%). While well over half of incoming first-year students said they would not have any loans (aid that must be repaid) for their first year of school

¹ The students’ responses to these questions do not always align with those from the previous question asking about sources of financial aid, seen in Figure 4.

(56.7%), one-third reported having \$3,000 or more in loans (32.6%), with more than one-in-ten saying they will have \$10,000 or more in loans (11.6%). Students themselves were least likely to be contributing to their college expenses, with close to 60 percent saying they themselves would be contributing nothing at all (27.3%) or less than \$1,000 (31.9%) of their own money to their first-year educational expenses. However, a number of students reported that they would be contributing \$6,000 or more of their own resources to pay first year expenses (7.8%). Finally, a notable number of students (64.2%) said they are receiving at least some aid that does not need to be repaid, such as grants or scholarships, with close to one-fourth receiving \$10,000 or more in such aid for their first-year expenses (23.3%).

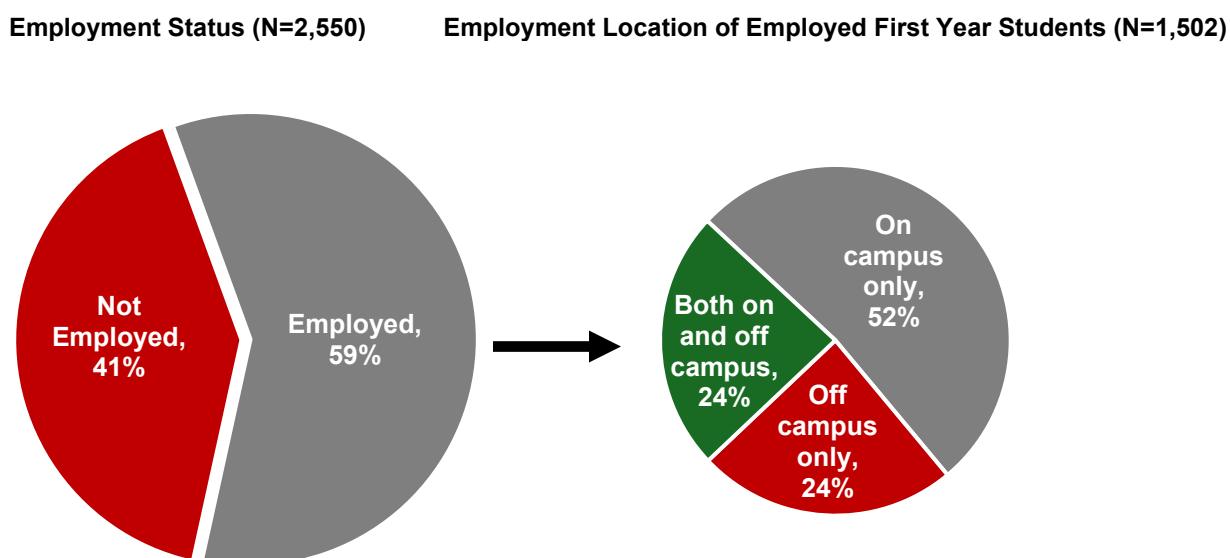
Table 16 - Sources of Education Funding

	None	Less than \$1,000	\$1,000 - \$2,999	\$3,000 - \$5,999	\$6,000 - \$9,999	\$10,000 or more	N
Expenses covered by: Family resources	11.8%	8.0%	9.1%	10.1%	10.9%	50.2%	2,941
Expenses covered by: Aid that does not need to be repaid	35.8%	8.4%	14.1%	10.8%	7.6%	23.3%	2,908
Expenses covered by: Aid that must be repaid	56.7%	3.5%	7.2%	16.2%	4.8%	11.6%	2,890
Expenses covered by: Own resources	27.3%	31.9%	23.0%	9.9%	3.4%	4.4%	2,896
Expenses covered by: Other source	95.9%	0.8%	0.6%	1.0%	0.3%	1.3%	1,083

Student Employment (Figures 5-6; Table 17)

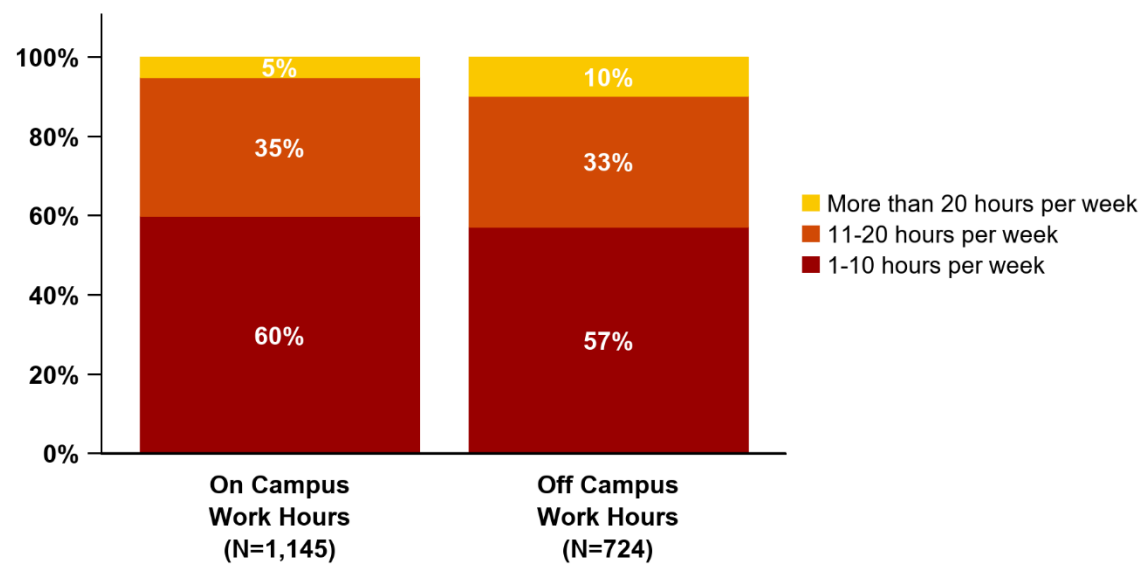
Well over half of respondents reported that they would be employed during their first year of college (59%). Of those, half indicated they would be employed only on campus (52%) while just under a quarter said they would be employed only off campus (24%) or both on and off campus (24%).

Figures 5: Employment Status and Work Location during First Year at NC State



About sixty percent of students planning on working during their first year at NC State said they would be working 10 hours or less per week (60% of those working on campus, and 57% of those working off campus). Ten percent of those working off campus said they would be working 20 or more hours per week at their off-campus job (10%).

Figure 6 - On Campus vs Off Campus Work Hours (Among Employed Respondents)



The relatively few students who reported that they will be working both on campus and off campus during their first year at NC State reported that they will work a relatively smaller number of hours at each location. Just over 40% of these respondents said that they will be working 1-10 hours at both their on campus and off campus jobs (42.8%), while about 20 percent said they would work 11-20 hours at each of their on and off campus jobs (18.8%). Three percent of respondents said they would work more than 20 hours at both their on campus and off campus jobs during their first year at NC State (3.3%)

Table 17 - Students Employed both On and Off Campus (N=237)

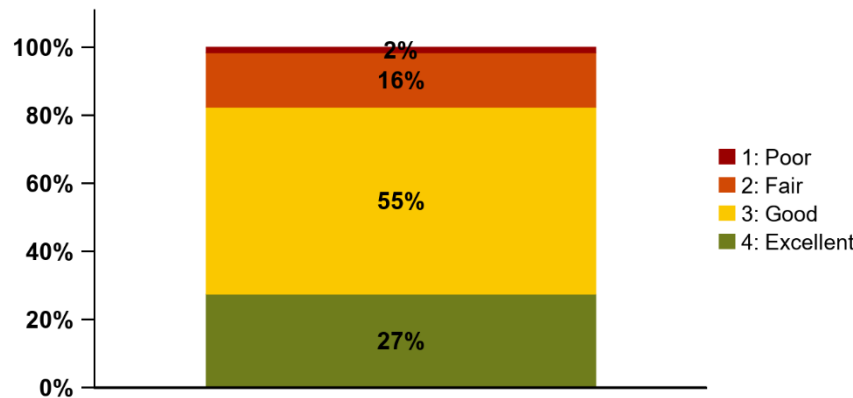
On campus (among those working)	Off campus (among those working)			Total
	1-10 hours per week	11-20 hours per week	More than 20 hours per week	
1-10 hours per week	42.8%	7.6%	4.4%	54.8%
11-20 hours per week	14.2%	18.8%	3.8%	36.8%
More than 20 hours per week	2.7%	2.5%	3.3%	8.4%
Total	59.7%	28.9%	11.4%	100.0%

Satisfaction with NC State Services

Rating of NC State Admissions Website (Figure 7)

When asked to evaluate the NC State Admissions website, 82% of respondents gave a rating of “excellent” (27%) or “good” (55%).

Figure 7 - Rating of the NC State Admissions Website (excluding those who responded “Never used”; N=3,005)



Satisfaction with NC State Financial Aid Process (Table 18)

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the NC State financial aid process on a scale from 1 (“very dissatisfied”) to 4 (“very satisfied”). Overall, incoming students were satisfied, more than three-fourths saying that they were either “very” (21.8%) or “moderately satisfied” (56.5%) with the financial aid process.

Table 18 - Satisfaction with NC State Financial Aid Process (excluding those who responded “Not Applicable”)

	%	N
Very satisfied	21.8%	554
Moderately satisfied	56.5%	1,437
Moderately dissatisfied	16.4%	416
Very dissatisfied	5.3%	135
Total	100.0%	2,542

New Student Orientation (Tables 19-23)

Incoming first-year students were provided a series of questions that asked them to rate their experiences with their college/department before and during New Student Orientation, as well as their experiences in attending Orientation. When asked about their interactions with their college/department prior to attending New Student Orientation, close to 85% said that they either “strongly agree” or “agree” that they were *provided opportunity to get answers to their academic questions* (84.2%), were *satisfied with the attention they received prior to Orientation* (83.8%), that the *information/advice they received prior to Orientation helped them to plan their fall schedule* (83.4%).

Table 19 - Rating of Experiences with College/Department Prior to Attending New Student Orientation

	Mean	4: Strongly agree	3: Agree	2: Disagree	1: Strongly disagree	N
Satisfied with attention received from college/dept prior to orientation	3.10	28.9%	54.9%	13.2%	3.0%	2,561
Communication with college/dept prior to orientation provided opportunity to get answers to academic questions	3.08	25.6%	58.6%	13.6%	2.2%	2,512
Info/advice from college/dept prior to orientation helped me to plan schedule	3.07	27.8%	55.6%	13.0%	3.7%	2,566

When asked the same questions about their interaction with their college/department during Orientation, they were even more satisfied, as about 90 percent also said they either “strongly agree” or “agree” that they were satisfied with the *attention received from their college/department during Orientation* (91.8%), the *time spent with their college/department to get answers to their academic questions* (90.4%), and that the *information/advice they received from their college/department helped them to confirm/adjust their fall schedule* (87.6%).

Table 20 - Rating of Experiences with College/Department During New Student Orientation

	Mean	4: Strongly agree	3: Agree	2: Disagree	1: Strongly disagree	N
Satisfied with attention received from college/dept during orientation	3.28	37.8%	54.0%	6.9%	1.2%	2,589
Communication with college/dept during orientation provided opportunity to get answers to academic questions	3.24	35.5%	54.9%	7.9%	1.7%	2,567
Info/advice from college/dept during orientation helped me to plan schedule	3.21	35.2%	52.4%	10.2%	2.2%	2,535

Incoming students indicated that New Student Orientation provided them with useful information in adapting to NC State. More than 90% said they “strongly agree” or “agree” that NSO provided useful information about *how to utilize their meal plan* (91.9%) and about *how to prepare for their fall semester* (90.4%). Large majorities also agreed NSO provided useful information about *how to prepare for move-in weekend* (85.5%), *how campus will communicate in emergencies* (85.2%), and about *the basics of financial aid and the bill payment process* (82.8%)

Table 21 - Agreement with New Student Orientation Providing Useful Information

	Mean	4: Strongly agree	3: Agree	2: Disagree	1: Strongly disagree	N
NSO provided useful info about: How to utilize meal plan	3.27	36.8%	55.1%	6.6%	1.4%	2,588
NSO provided useful info about: How to prepare for fall semester	3.20	31.1%	59.3%	8.2%	1.3%	2,600
NSO provided useful info about: How to prepare for move-in weekend	3.14	30.2%	55.3%	13.1%	1.4%	2,559
NSO provided useful info about: How campus will communicate in emergencies	3.12	29.8%	55.4%	12.3%	2.5%	2,519
NSO provided useful info about: Basics of financial aid and bill payment process	3.02	22.7%	60.1%	13.6%	3.5%	2,521

In addition, over 95% believe because of their participation in NSO they can identify resources and behaviors to promote both their personal well-being and that of the campus community.

Table 22 - Result of Participation in New Student Orientation

	Mean	4: Strongly agree	3: Agree	2: Disagree	1: Strongly disagree	N
I can identify resources to promote personal well-being	3.36	39.0%	58.5%	2.3%	0.3%	2,567
I can identify behaviors to promote personal well-being	3.32	36.5%	59.6%	3.6%	0.3%	2,573
I can identify resources to promote community well-being	3.30	34.7%	60.8%	4.2%	0.3%	2,565
I can identify behaviors to promote community well-being	3.29	34.3%	61.1%	4.1%	0.5%	2,567

Over 95% of incoming first-year students agree that after participating in New Student Orientation they are *excited to start their first semester* at NC State (97.0%), and close to 95% agree that they *feel better prepared to start their first semester* (93.5%). NSO also gets positive feedback from students with respect to familiarizing students with NC State history and tradition, with 91% agreeing they had learned more about such things (90.8%). In addition, most incoming first-year students believe that their experiences at NC State help them connect with others. Close to 95% “strongly agree” or “agree” that as a result of their participation in NSO they *feel more connected to the NC State community* (93.3%), while just over 85% “strongly agree” or “agree” that orientation small groups helped them connect with other students (86.7%), and 75% “strongly agree” or “agree” that the overnight stay helped them connect with other students (75.7%). However, while the large majority of NSO attendees agree time spent at orientation was a good use of time (82.4%), almost one-in-five incoming students disagree (17.6%).

Table 23 – Overall Evaluation of New Student Orientation

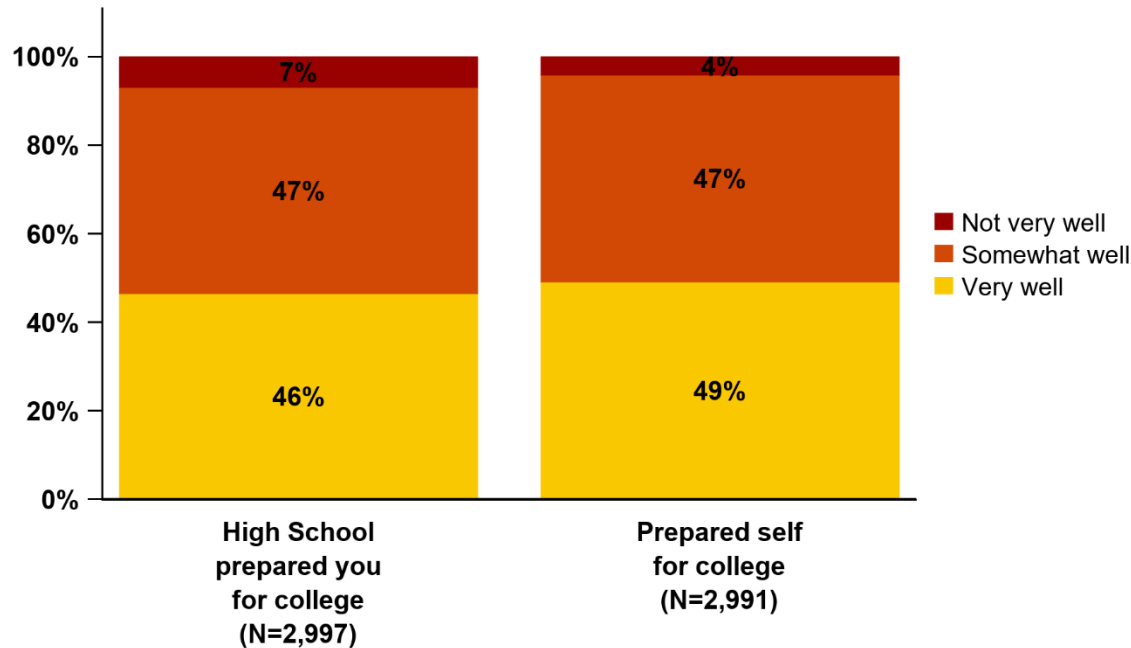
	Mean	4: Strongly agree	3: Agree	2: Disagree	1: Strongly disagree	N
I am excited to start first semester	3.54	58.0%	39.0%	2.5%	0.5%	2,589
I feel better prepared to start first semester	3.37	44.1%	49.4%	5.8%	0.7%	2,592
I feel more connected to NC State community	3.31	39.3%	54.0%	5.7%	1.1%	2,593
Orientation small groups helped me connect with other students	3.26	42.4%	44.3%	10.6%	2.7%	2,597
Orientation helped me learn more about NC State history and traditions	3.17	27.4%	63.4%	7.6%	1.6%	2,574
Time spent at orientation was good use of time	3.08	30.0%	52.4%	13.3%	4.3%	2,595
Overnight stay helped me connect with other students	3.05	34.4%	41.3%	19.3%	5.0%	2,062

Demographic and Family Background Characteristics

College Preparation (Figure 8)

Over 45% of respondents reported that they felt they were “very well” prepared for college by their high school (46%) and by their own efforts (49%).

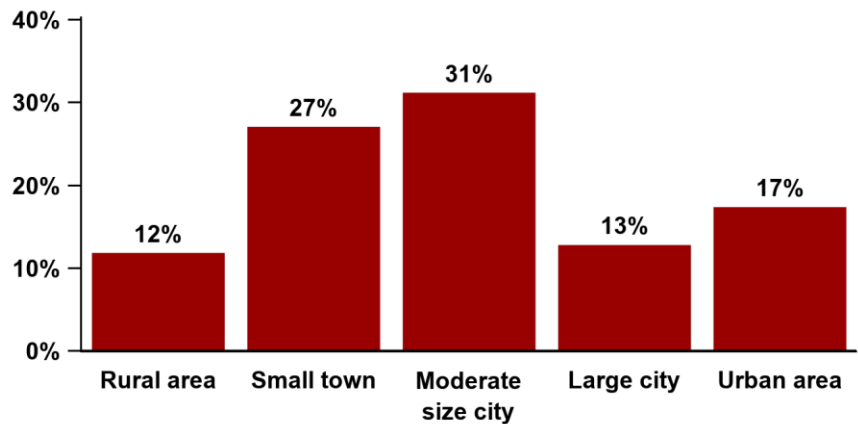
Figure 8 - College Preparation



Hometown Geographic Area (Figure 9)

Almost 40 percent of incoming first-year students responding to the survey reported that they were from a “rural area” (12%) or a “small town” (27%), while 30% come from a “large city” (13%) or an “urban area” (17%).

Figure 9: Hometown Geographic Area (N=2,621)



First Generation College Students (Table 24)

Almost 20% of respondents are a first-generation college student, with 9% having no parent/guardian of theirs ever attending college (9.3%), and 10% with a parent/guardian having attended college, but not earning a four-year degree (9.7%).

Table 24 - First Generation College Students

	%	N
First generation college student	9.3%	291
At least one parent some college/no degree	9.7%	286
Not first generation	81.5%	2,542
Total	100.0%	3,119

Financial Resources (Tables 25-28; Figures 10-11)

Incoming first-year students were asked a series of questions pertaining to their family's finances and household demographics. When asked to estimate their parents'/guardians' combined 2023 pre-tax income, among those responding almost two-thirds respondents reported that their family's combined income was over \$100,000 (64.3%), with over 40 percent reporting it was over \$150,000 (43.4%), and 29% reporting it was over \$200,000 (28.7%). Twelve percent of incoming students reported that their family income was \$50,000 or less (12.2%).

Table 25 - Parents'/Guardians' Combined Pre-Tax Income (excluding those who selected either "Don't know" or "Prefer not to respond")

	%	N
\$30,000 or less	4.4%	55
\$30,001-\$50,000	7.8%	98
\$50,001-\$75,000	10.7%	135
\$75,001-\$100,000	11.9%	150
\$100,001-\$150,000	21.9%	276
\$150,001-\$200,000	14.7%	186
More than \$200,000	28.7%	363
Total	100.0%	1,263

Students from lower income families were more likely to say they would be employed during their first year at NC State. More than two-thirds of those coming from a family with a combined income of \$50,000 or less (69.1%) reported they will be working. In comparison, just over half of those from a family with a combined income over \$200,000 planned on being employed (54.9%).

Table 26 - Student Employment Status for First Year at NC State, by Family Income

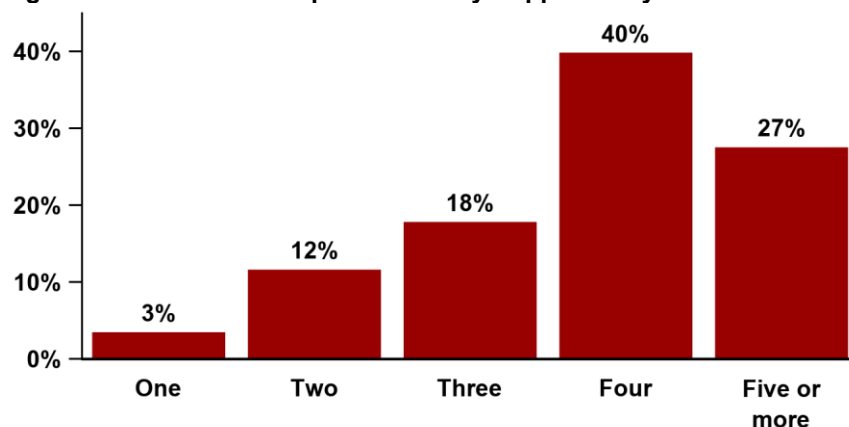
Parent's income (recoded)	Whether employed or not		N
	Employed	Not employed	
\$50,000 or less	69.1%	30.9%	152
\$50,001-\$100,000	66.1%	33.9%	283
\$100,001-\$150,000	65.4%	34.6%	272
\$150,001-\$200,000	48.1%	51.9%	185
Over \$200,000	54.9%	45.1%	359
Total	60.4%	39.6%	1,251

Students from relatively lower income families were more likely to report using financial aid that requires repayment. For example, a majority of respondents from families making \$150,000 or less per year will use loans to help pay for their expenses, which is not the case for higher income categories. Students from families making \$50,001-\$100,000 were the most likely to report using loans (64.4%), while students from families making over \$200,000 were the least likely to do so (27.1%).

Table 27 - Students Using Aid That Must be Repaid to Cover First Year Educational Costs by Family Income

Parent's income (recoded)	Expenses covered by: Aid that must be repaid (recoded)				N
	None	Less than \$1,000	\$1,000-\$5,999	\$6,000 or more	
\$50,000 or less	48.0%	2.6%	36.2%	13.2%	152
\$50,001-\$100,000	35.6%	4.3%	39.5%	20.6%	281
\$100,001-\$150,000	46.0%	2.9%	25.4%	25.7%	272
\$150,001-\$200,000	59.0%	3.3%	20.2%	17.5%	183
Over \$200,000	72.9%	1.4%	13.4%	12.3%	351
Total	53.4%	2.8%	25.7%	18.0%	1,239

Two-thirds of respondents indicated that they came from a household with four or more members financially supported by their parents/guardians, including themselves and their parents/guardians (67%). Three percent reported only one person in their household was financially supported by their parents.

Figure 10: Number of People Financially Supported by Parents/Guardians (N=2,421)

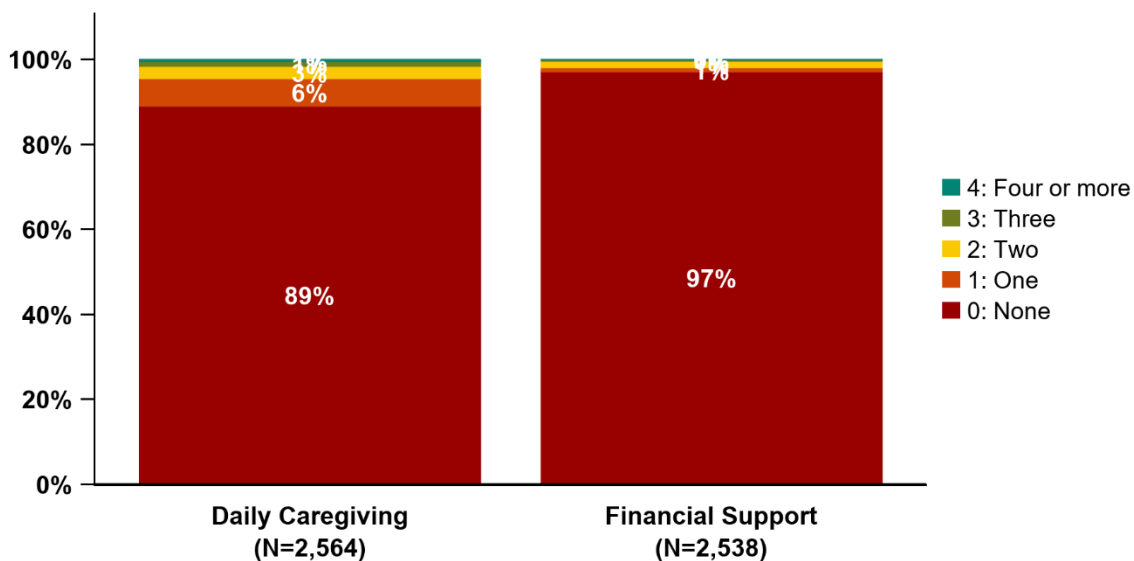
When asked about their parents'/guardians' dependents enrolled in college, a little less than two-thirds said they were the only dependent in their household currently enrolled (63.5%).

Table 28 - Parents'/Guardians' Dependents Enrolled in College

	%	N
Only myself	63.5%	1,542
Two	31.1%	756
Three or more	5.4%	131
Total	100.0%	2,429

While the majority of respondents do not provide day-to-day caregiving to someone, about one-in-ten first-year students report providing day-to-day caregiving for someone (e.g., children, elders) (11%). Only 3 percent report that they provide the majority of financial support for someone (e.g., children, elders).

Figure 11 - Number of People Depending on Student for Daily Caregiving and Financial Support



In Their Own Words: Anticipating Life at NC State

Incoming first-year students were asked to describe in their own words what they were most excited about in coming to NC State, as well as any concerns they had. Responses to these questions were categorized into a variety of topics as reported below.

What Students Are Excited About (Table 29)

Table 29 outlines the different categorized topics of what excites students the most about their first year at NC State. Students were most likely to mention being excited about things related to social life (58.4%), adapting to NC State (55.4%), and learning (33.9%). Descriptions and example quotes for these categories can be found below Table 29.

Table 29: What Students are Excited About (N category codes = 1,397*)

	N	%
Social Life	1085	58.4%
Adapting to NC State	1030	55.4%
Learning	630	33.9%
Campus Life	500	26.9%
Independence	298	16.0%
Intellectual Environment	227	12.2%
Opportunities	187	10.1%
Career Planning	111	6.0%
Housing	52	2.8%
Time Management	49	2.6%
Cocurricular Activities	35	1.9%
Spirit and Pride	31	1.7%
Instruction	30	1.6%
Academic Performance	30	1.6%
Health	23	1.2%
Transportation	10	0.5%
Registration	9	0.5%
Safety	6	0.3%
Finances	5	0.3%
Other	5	0.3%
Technology	1	0.1%

*Some student responses were included in more than one category. "N category codes = 1,397" represents the total number of codes assigned to all student responses to this open-ended question.

Social Life

Students most frequently expressed excitement about their social life at NC State, specifically how they anticipate finding their people and getting out of their shell. Examples of such comments include:

- *"I'm really excited to meet new people and start my young adult life surrounded by a good community of people that will motivate me in my faith and my academic work."*
- *"I am most excited to hopefully make some new friends. I was a loner the last few years of high school and would like to reconnect with people my age. I want to get out of my comfort zone and interact with campus events more than I would've in the past."*
- *"Creating a connection with the people in my major, especially other women. I have felt isolated for a long time in my current hometown and meeting other women in engineering is an exciting way for me to express my interests."*
- *"I am most excited about living in the Global Village since I am excited to make friends with international students and other students as well as learn about different cultures."*

Adapting to NC State

Incoming students look forward to the upcoming changes of their life. Being in a new environment and adjusting to a new routine excites them. Examples of such comments include:

- *"I'm excited about getting settled on campus"*
- *"I am most excited about finding the groove of things"*
- *"I'm excited to figure everything out. This, to me, is the time to test the waters in many regards, so I'm excited to meet new people and to figure out which classes appeal most to me."*
- *"I am most excited about... getting to be on my own for a little bit and adjust to that."*

Learning

Excitement about learning was frequently mentioned by students. Many described how they were ready to study topics of their own interest, especially those that weren't part of previous coursework. Examples of such comments include:

- *"I am most excited about getting to be able to study and learn about topics that I am passionate about that I otherwise couldn't in high school."*
- *"I'm most excited about learning new things about my areas of interest every day. I'm also excited to grow as an individual and get to work on becoming the inspiring role model I would want to have both personally and academically."*
- *"I am so excited to LEARN!!! I want to use this time to study and obtain knowledge that I can use in my own, personal, interdisciplinary studies!! I want to learn so many things!"*
- *"I am excited about actually getting to learn information that is new to me. I'm majoring in political science and history, and I research and study these fields a lot on my own so high school social studies classes felt very limited compared to what I knew. Now at NCSU, I'm confident that I will be able to take classes where I don't know everything and can actually be challenged to learn new things."*

Campus Life

Students who expressed enthusiasm about campus life often mentioned being excited to get involved with activities at NC State that meet their interests. Examples of such comments include:

- *"I am most excited about getting involved with student organizations and life while starting my first semester here at NC State. I see getting involved with student affairs as a way to step out of my comfort zone and getting to know people who share the same interests and goals as me, whether academically or personally."*
- *"I am excited to meet new people and be in the amazing city of Raleigh. I am excited for football games and basketball games and to be part of the exciting culture that NC State possesses."*
- *"I'm excited for all the "stuff" there is to do at NC State. Packapalooza, athletic games, clubs, just meeting people, classes, it all is exciting me with every passing day."*
- *"I am most excited about engaging with different clubs and organizations. I want to pursue passions I couldn't in high school and meet new people."*

Independence

Becoming more independent is very exciting for incoming students. Specifically, students were excited to develop new skills on their own and set their own schedules. Examples of such comments include:

- *"I am most excited about experiencing independence and using campus and my newfound life to start building my confidence in myself and also have real opportunities to learn about my interests."*
- *"I'm very excited to make new friends and be independent from my family, as well as learn to handle my time and work under pressure"*
- *"I most excited to start learning how to be independent. Now that I'm living on campus, there will be nobody there to make sure I go to classes, and nobody there to tell me what to do. I see this as a challenge on whether or not I can do this and that I do have the mindset to do what I have to do in order to be successful. Whether that's not going to parties every night, and getting a good night's rest. I'm ready to prove myself."*
- *"I'm most excited about the new environment and independence this experience will provide despite my nerves due to never being far from home or family."*

For all the verbatim responses for what students are most excited about at NC State, see [Verbatim Responses: What students are most excited and concerned about in coming to NC State, in their own words.](#)

What Students Are Concerned About (Table 30)

Table 30 outlines the different topics into which student comments regarding what they are most concerned about in coming to NC State were categorized. Students were most likely to mention being most concerned about learning (33.3%), academic performance (32.4%), and adapting to NC State (31.8%). Descriptions and example quotes for these categories can be found below Table 30.

Table 30: What Students are Concerned About (N category codes = 1,310*)

	N	%
Learning	578	33.3%
Academic Performance	562	32.4%
Adapting to NC State	553	31.8%
Social Life	381	21.9%
Independence	344	19.8%
Time Management	270	15.5%
Health	171	9.8%
Housing	117	6.7%
Campus Life	112	6.4%
Intellectual Environment	72	4.1%
Finances	59	3.4%
Registration	55	3.2%
Career Planning	38	2.2%
Instruction	29	1.7%
Safety	29	1.7%
Opportunities	23	1.3%
Transportation	17	1.0%
Technology	7	0.4%
Cocurricular Activities	3	0.2%
Instructional Mode	3	0.2%
COVID-19	2	0.1%
Spirit and Pride	2	0.1%

*Some student responses were included in more than one category. "N category codes = 1,310" represents the total number of codes assigned to all student responses to this open-ended question.

Learning

While students expressed excitement about learning new material, students also express concern with comprehending course content and whether they have chosen the right course of study. Examples of such comments include:

- *"I am concerned that I will not understand some of the more complex STEM classes required for my elementary ed degree... Just hoping that I don't get overwhelmed with my course load and managing my time"*
- *"I am nervous about the world language classes that I am required to take. Spanish has been my one kryptonite since day one, however, I am looking forward to exploring new ways to make learning it easier for me."*
- *"I am considering changing my major due to pressure, so I am worried that I'll miss classes and have a lot to catch up on if I do change majors, as well as picking a major that's unfit for me"*
- *"I'm mostly nervous about my unsure feelings over my major. I'm scared that I am going to waste time/money on something that I'm not 100% with...."*

Academic Performance

Students who expressed concern about performance often mentioned concerns with keeping up with the workload, doing poorly in classes, and feeling unprepared for college. Examples of students who mentioned concerns with academic performance include:

- *"What I am most concerned about is not being prepared well enough by my high school and not knowing as much as other students. I'm scared of failure and being helpless."*
- *"I'm concerned with keep up high grades. I have always been an "A" roll student, but I also understand that you can't always achieve that."*
- *"I'm nervous about my grades because I've heard that some of the coursework is particularly challenging; however, I'm excited to overcome any obstacles or tough situations that I may encounter."*
- *"Exams being weighted much more and the stress of performing well on an exam and the thought of not knowing if you are fully prepared for one."*

Adapting to NC State

While students are excited about the transition to NC State, students also expressed concern with adapting to NC State. Students were particularly concerned with being away from home, having less personal space, and maintaining a balance between schoolwork and life outside the classroom. Examples of such comments include:

- *"I am very nervous about leaving my small town and my dog. Moving to a big city kind of scares me."*
- *"I am anxious about the adjustment to campus life, lack of a personal space to return to and ground myself, and managing my time and energy. I am also nervous about meeting people I click with."*
- *"I am a little nervous about balancing expectations for myself in academics and life outside of college. I know that there will be a shift in both transitioning from high school to college, so I am concerned about maintaining a balance between these two in my life during my first semester."*
- *"I'm just nervous about starting college in general. I'm worried that I won't be able to adjust to college life, especially after getting so used to a high school schedule."*

Social Life

Many students expressed excitement about social life their first year at NC State, but they also expressed concern with making new friends, finding support, and having time to do things they enjoy. Examples of such comments include:

- *"I am most concerned about how well I will be able to connect with my peers, since I am living off- campus and I will not have the opportunity to bond with roommates or people with a similar living situation."*
- *"Definitely developing new friends. I'm not a very social person, I don't have many friends, and I sometimes I feel like I don't have a good connection to the friends I do have."*
- *"I am most nervous about starting college in a completely new city and making new friends. All my friends are going to different colleges, and while I am acquainted with some school peers that are also going to NC State, we are not close enough to be called friends. Sometimes I question whether I will be able to make new friend groups and close relationships, but I am confident that it will happen during my time at college."*
- *"That I won't have enough free time to hang out with friends or play games because of that "for every hour in class you need to spend 3 hours outside of it studying" stuff they mentioned during orientation"*

Independence

Students expressed both excitement and concern with newfound independence. Many were concerned with self-discipline, making mistakes, and responsibility. Examples of such comments include:

- *"Despite it being the biggest thing I'm excited for, I'm also worried about the consequences of my freedom and how I'll adapt now that my parents aren't here to scold or correct me."*
- *"I have no idea how to live on my own and there is a good chance I will screw some stuff up. Just hoping it won't ruin me."*
- *"I am most nervous for the transition into college because there are a lot of unknowns. It is a huge change from living with your family to living by yourself and growing up into an independent adult."*
- *"I'm not totally sure I'm ready to live on my own. I've been away from my parents before, so it's not that, but being financially responsible for myself? It just feels weird."*

Time Management

Many students expressed concern about time management in college, particularly with work-life balance, procrastination, and managing responsibilities. Examples of such comments include:

- *"I am most concerned about managing my class load and not procrastinating"*
- *"Balancing college and education with getting a job and finances. I want to work while in college to get a jump on my debts, but I also don't know how well I'll be able to balance studying with a work schedule. I can't properly predict how well I'd be able to balance it until I know what it takes, but I won't know what it takes until I try, which I don't feel like I can do without knowing if I can balance it, which... ad nauseam."*
- *"I'm concerned that with such a different schedule, time management may be harder. You have to be able to manage your own time very affectively and it may be a little harder to do."*
- *"I'm worried about time management and how I'll deal with emotional stressors. I'm concerned about balancing academics with extracurriculars and maintaining a life beyond school on top of that."*

For all the verbatim responses for what students are most concerned about their first year at NC State, see [Verbatim Responses: What students are most excited and concerned about in coming to NC State, in their own words.](#)

For more information on the 2024 Incoming First-Year Student Survey, contact:

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