

2018 Incoming Transfer Student Survey: Highlights

NC State conducted its annual survey of incoming transfer students prior to and at the beginning of the Fall 2018 semester. Eligible students included all incoming NC State transfer students at the beginning of the Fall 2018 semester. Of the 1,341 eligible incoming transfer students, 661 returned usable surveys for a response rate of 49.3%.

NC State's academic reputation is very influential in students' decisions to attend. About 90 percent of incoming transfer students said that NC State was their first or only choice of colleges to transfer to continue their academic career. *Academic reputation* was most frequently reported as the single most influential factor in the decision to attend NC State, with one-fourth of incoming transfer students reporting this, followed by *availability of program* and *location*.

High achievement is important to incoming students. Almost half of incoming transfer students said that their *primary goal or objective for attending NC State* is to obtain a “bachelor’s degree or certificate for career preparation,” while 44 percent responded that it was to “obtain a bachelor’s degree for graduate school preparation.” Nearly two-thirds of respondents say they eventually plan to pursue a master’s, doctoral, or professional degree.

Students feel well prepared for college by their previous institution and their own efforts, but less so by their high school. Over 95 percent of incoming transfer students said they were at least “somewhat well” prepared for college by both their last institution and by their own efforts, with well over half saying they were “very well” prepared for college by both their last institution and their own efforts. In contrast, over 23 percent said that they were “not very well” prepared for college by their high school.

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 generally similarly ranked high relative to other goals in terms of their importance as well. There were some exceptions, most notably for *time management* and *ability to handle stress*, which were viewed as being very important but ranked low in terms of development. Goals ranking high in both current level of development and importance included *taking responsibility for my own behavior*, *ability to work with people from diverse backgrounds*, *ability to plan and carry out projects independently*, *listening attentively*, and *experiencing personal growth*.

Students report using various sources, including their own money, to pay for their college expenses. Over half of respondents said that they will be taking out loans that must be repaid, with 10 percent taking out loans of at least \$10,000 for their first year at NC State. Close to half of incoming transfer students reported that they will be contributing at least \$1,000 of their own resources to their first year education expenses at NC State (46.3%), with seven percent contributing at least \$6,000. Over 70 percent of incoming transfer students said 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 transfer students. Incoming transfer students gave high ratings to the NC State admissions process, with over 90 percent saying they were at least “moderately satisfied” and half saying they were “very satisfied.” Nearly 85 percent gave a rating of “excellent” or “good” to the NC State admissions website. Over 80 percent of incoming transfer students gave positive ratings to the NC State academic services website, with one-fourth saying the academic services website was “excellent.” Regarding NC State’s financial process, about 85 percent said they were at least “moderately satisfied.”

Incoming transfer students report various reasons for taking a lighter course load in their first semester at NC State. Almost 44 percent of transfer students reported being enrolled in fewer than 15 credit hours during their first semester at NC State. Most common reasons given for taking a lighter course load were *wanting to be able to make better grades; need to work; courses wanted were not available; was advised to carry a lighter load by my advisor; and the combination of credit hours would have been too much if I took another big course at the same time.*

Anticipated experiences both excite and concern incoming transfer 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 learning, the intellectual environment, social life, campus life, opportunities, adapting to NC State, career planning, their academic performance, and cocurricular activities. Similarly, students were most likely to say they were nervous about their academic performance, adapting to NC State, social life, time management, the intellectual environment, and independence.

For more information on the 2018 Incoming Transfer Student Survey, contact:

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