

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

2019 Incoming Transfer Student Survey: Highlights

NC State conducted its annual survey of incoming transfer students prior to and at the beginning of the Fall 2019 semester. Eligible students included all Fall 2019 incoming NC State transfer students. Of the 1,305 incoming transfer students in a four-year degree-seeking program eligible to complete the survey, 546 returned usable surveys for a response rate of 41.8%.

NC State's academic reputation is very influential in students' decisions to attend. More than 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 their decisions to attend NC State, with nearly 30 percent of incoming transfer students reporting this, followed by *availability of program and location*.

High achievement is important to incoming students. While over half of respondents said that their primary goal/objective for attending NC State was to obtain a bachelor's degree “in preparation for a career,” over 60 percent of respondents reported that they ultimately planned to pursue a master's, doctoral, or professional degree. Nearly 90 percent reported that they anticipated completing their bachelor's degree in three years or less after transferring to NC State.

Students feel well prepared for college by their previous institution and their own efforts, but less so by their high school. About 95 percent of incoming transfer students said they were at least “somewhat well” prepared for further study by their previous institution, and for college by their own efforts; well over half said they were “very well” prepared by both. In contrast, over 20 percent said that they were “not very well” prepared for college by their high school, with less than one-third saying they were “very well” prepared 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 49 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 in importance relative to other goals as well. There were some exceptions to this, most notably for *time management*, *ability to manage ongoing stressors*, *recovering from emotional setbacks*, and *speaking effectively* which were ranked high in terms of importance, but relatively low in development. Conversely, some goals ranked high in development but low importance, including *appreciating differences in sexual orientation*; *understanding the need for sustainability as the pursuit of balanced, ethical solutions that are economically viable, environmentally sound, and socially just*; and *sensitivity to issues associated with gender equity*.

Students report using various sources, including their own money, to pay for their college expenses. Almost half of incoming transfer students reported that they will be contributing at least \$1,000 of their own resources to their education expenses for their first year at NC State, with almost 10 percent contributing at least \$6,000. Nearly half of respondents said that they will be taking out loans that must be repaid, with 12.5 percent taking out loans of at least \$10,000 for their first year as an NC State student. Three-fourths of transfer students reported that they intend to work either on or off campus, or both, 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 almost 90 percent saying they were at least “moderately satisfied” and nearly half saying they were “very satisfied” with the process, while over 80 percent gave a rating of “excellent” or “good” to the NC State Admissions website. About 80 percent of incoming transfer students gave a positive rating to the NC State Academic Advising Services website, with 31.6 percent saying the website was “excellent.” Finally, 85.4 percent of respondents also said they were at least “moderately satisfied” with the NC State financial aid process.

Incoming transfer students report various reasons for taking a lighter course load in their first semester at NC State. Over 40 percent of incoming transfer students reported being enrolled in fewer than 15 credit hours during their first semester at NC State. The most common reasons given for taking a lighter course load were: *want to be able to make better grades; need to work; courses wanted were not available; and the combination of credit hours would have been too much if taking 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 things pertaining to the intellectual environment on campus, learning, social life, campus life, adapting to NC State, potential opportunities on campus and in their careers, classroom instruction, and independence of being a college student. Similarly, students were most likely to say that issues they were nervous about in coming to NC State included adapting to NC State, their academic performance, social life, campus life, the intellectual environment on campus, independence of being a college student, and classroom instruction.

For more information on the 2019 Incoming Transfer Student Survey, contact:

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