

T R A N S F E R S T U D E N T I N V O L V E M E N T

Student Affairs Assessment Report

T H E O H I O S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y

Autumn 2006

The OSU Student Involvement Survey

The OSU Student Involvement Survey was developed by the Office of Student Affairs Assessment to investigate the involvement of undergraduate students in social and academic activities and support services at OSU main campus. Information was collected on the extent to which students participate in social and academic activities, and utilize university services and resources. The instrument included additional questions for transfer students regarding their integration on campus and satisfaction with OSU as their new home institution.

In Spring quarter 2006, the online survey instrument was sent to all 20,388 Rank 1-4 students who entered in the last three years. The overall response rate was 26.8%. Given the focus on transfer students of this newsletter, results are reported regarding students at Rank 2 and Rank 3 where the number of students in both transfer and native groups are adequate for statistical and substantive comparisons. This yields a pool of 3,166 respondents, 689 (21.8%) transfer students and 2,477 (78.2%) native students.

The racial/ethnic composition of the sample is comparable to the student population: White/Caucasian (83.4%), Black/African American (6.0%), Asian/Pacific Islander (5.2%), International (1.9%), Hispanic (1.8%), American Indian (0.2%), and Other (1.4%). The adjacent table gives the rank and entry of the respondents comprising the sample used in this newsletter.

		Entry		Total
		Native	Transfer	
Rank 2	Count	1,367	262	1,629
	% within rank	83.9%	16.1%	100.0%
Rank 3	Count	1,110	427	1,537
	% within rank	72.2%	27.8%	100.0%
Total	Count	2,477	689	3,166
	% within rank	78.2%	21.8%	100.0%

As transferring between institutions became a common phenomenon in higher education, transfer students have increasingly represented a distinctive student population at Ohio State. Given their later entry point into the university and prior experiences at other institutions, transfer students might approach their education at OSU differently than students who started as new freshmen. For Student Affairs professionals to understand the transfer student group better, this newsletter reports selected findings from the OSU Student Involvement Survey, with a focus on the involvement patterns of transfer students.

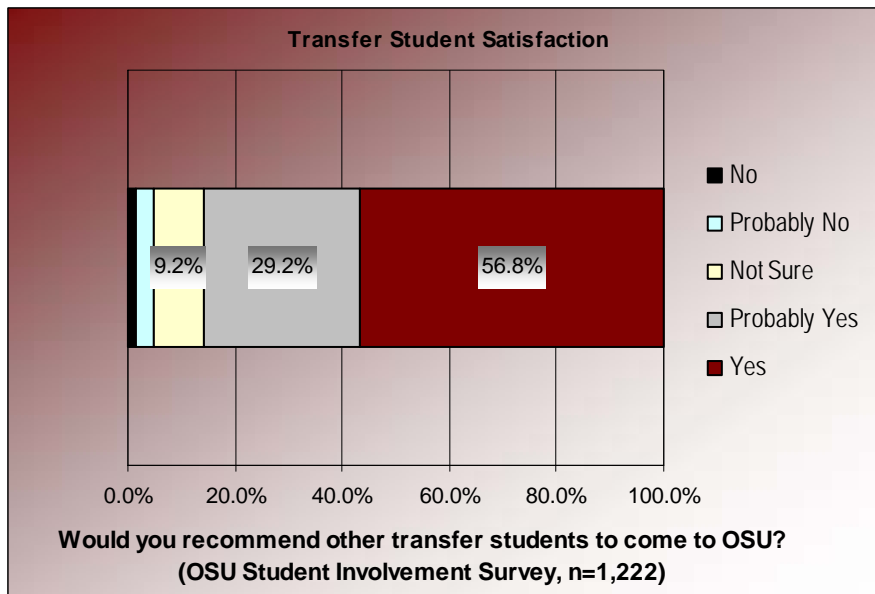
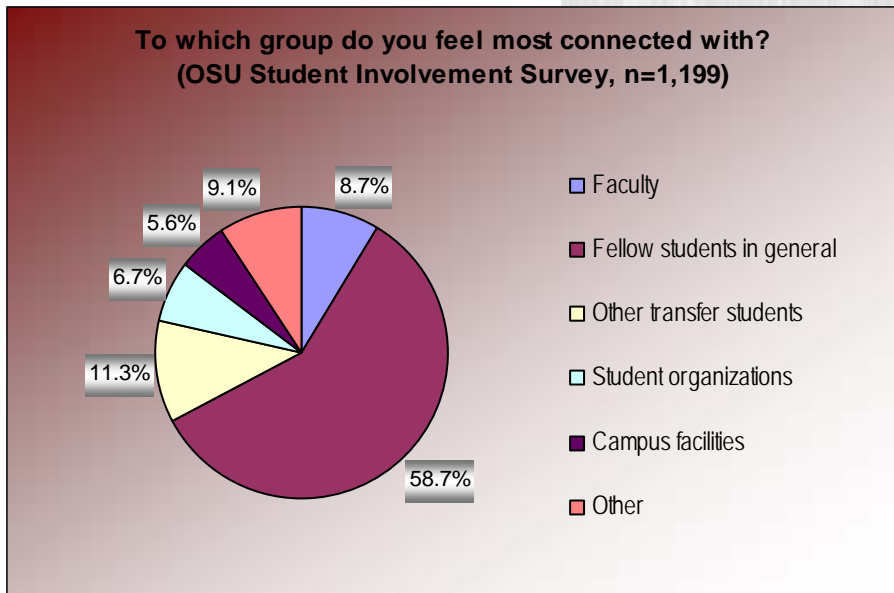
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Findings

Transfer Student Overall University Experience and Satisfaction

On the survey, respondents who are transfer students were asked to identify the part of campus community with which they feel most connected. More than half of the transfer students (58.7%) reported student peers, regardless of whether they are transfers or not, as the group with which they are most connected.



To gauge the satisfaction with their experience as transfer students at OSU, students who transferred to OSU were asked whether they would recommend other transfer students to come to OSU. More than half of the transfer students (56.8%) responded “Yes” to the question. The majority of respondents (86%) said they would, or probably would, recommend OSU for other transfer students.

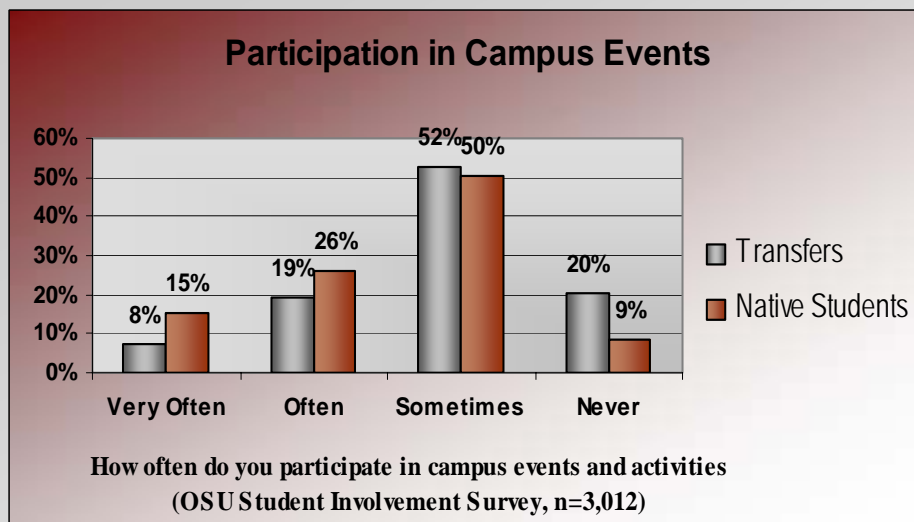
Transfer Student Involvement

A total of 42 items on the survey were employed to measure student involvement consisting of four dimensions: Social Involvement, Academic Involvement, Participation in Student Organization, and Utilization of Student Affairs Services. Data were analyzed separately for Rank 2 and Rank 3 students to account for distinctive behavior patterns among students at different ranks. Statistical analyses indicate that transfer students exhibit different patterns of involvement from native students.

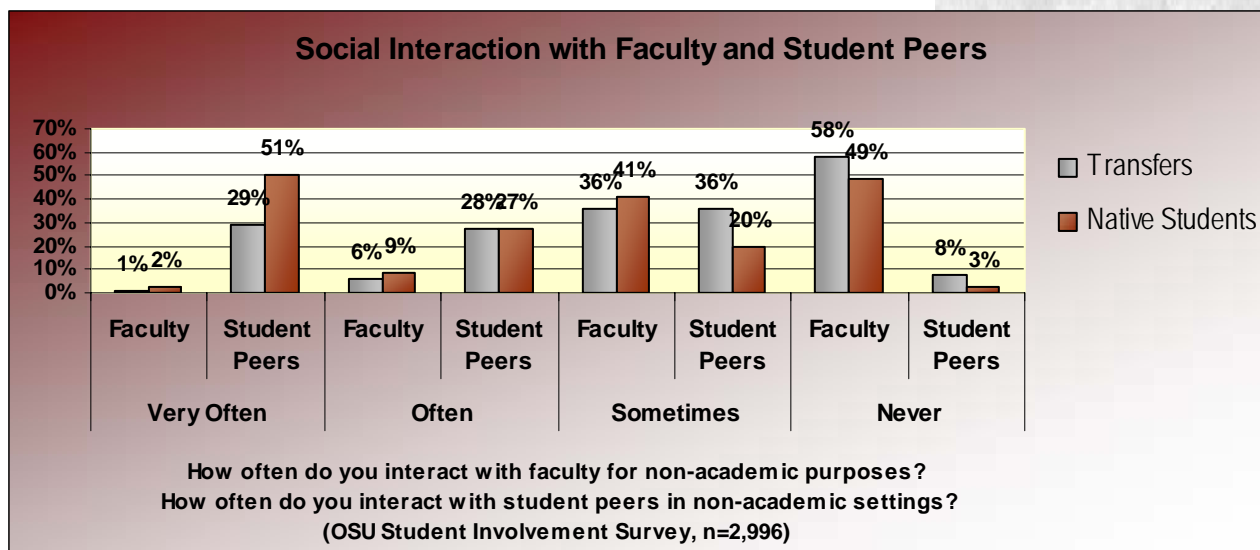
Findings

Transfer Student Involvement, Continued

Social Involvement



Social involvement was measured by a scale consisting of items addressing campus event participation and interaction with faculty and student peers. In general, across both ranks, transfer students reported a significantly lower level of social involvement. More detailed results are provided in the charts on this page.



Academic Involvement

Academic Involvement was measured by two multiple-item scales: Independent and Active Learning, and Outside Class Academic-Related Interaction.

- Independent and Active Learning:** Findings indicate that transfer students scored higher than their native counterparts on the scale measuring active and independent learning. The independent sample *t* tests and effect size calculation revealed that this difference is statistically and substantively significant among Rank 3 students. There is no statistical difference between Rank 2 transfer and native students on this measure.
- Outside Class Academic-Related Interaction:** In regard to academic-related interaction outside class, Rank 2 transfer students reported significantly lower scores than Rank 2 native students. However, this difference diminished among Rank 3 students.

Findings

Transfer Student Involvement, Continued Participation in Student Organizations

Number of Organizations Participated	Entry		Total
	Native Students	Transfer Students	
0	474 (20.8%)	373 (58.8%)	847 (29.1%)
1	482 (21.1%)	124 (19.6%)	606 (20.8%)
2	419 (18.4%)	65 (10.3%)	730 (17.5%)
3	377 (16.5%)	32 (5.0%)	484 (16.6%)
More than 3	527 (23.1%)	40 (6.3%)	787 (18.9%)
Total	2,281(100.0%)	634 (100.0%)	2,915 (100.0%)

A list of OSU student organizations was provided on the survey and respondents were asked to choose the ones of which they are a member. The number of organizations students participate was calculated and a comparison between transfers and native students was made. Results show that transfer student participation in student organizations is significantly lower than native students.

Utilization of Student Affairs Services

The survey listed offices in Student Affairs and asked respondents whether they have heard of the offices and how often they use services provided by the offices. Findings indicate that (for both Rank 2 and 3 students):

- Native students are significantly more aware of available support services than transfer students.
- Transfer student usage of student services is significantly less frequent than that for native students.

Conclusion

While past practices in Student Affairs programming takes into consideration student differences by gender, ethnicity, etc., student transfer status is usually not considered. The survey results have revealed that transfer students do differ from native students in patterns of involvement and, in most areas, transfer students are less involved.

Much research on college student retention has suggested that student involvement is key to persistence (Bean, 1990; Tinto, 1993). Voluminous empirical studies revealed that college student involvement is positively related to their educational and personal development. Analyses on the data from the OSU Student Involvement Survey have shown results consistent with literature and indicated that active student involvement positively predicts student GPA and satisfaction with various aspects of college.

Given the critical role of involvement, it is reasonable to make the argument that to facilitate transfer students in achieving desired educational outcomes, effective ways of involving transfer students should be identified.

**This newsletter is based on part of the data from the OSU Student Involvement Survey which contains some other questions not included herein, such as student expectations before entering OSU, background information including work, financial situation, etc. Please feel free to contact Student Affairs Assessment to discuss how the survey might answer some questions of your particular interest.*

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