



2013 Noel-Levitz Research Report

The Attitudes and Motivations of College Transfer Students

To strengthen pathways to college completion, many in higher education are zeroing in on improving completion rates among transfer students—a growing undergraduate subpopulation on campuses of all types.

To support this effort, this report looks beyond transfer students' test scores and grade point averages at a range of "non-cognitive" attitudes that influence their motivation, engagement, persistence, and college completion. The report is **based on student survey responses** drawn from a sizable sample of transfer students enrolled at four-year and two-year institutions from 2010 to 2012.

Among the findings:

- Ninety-three percent of respondents in this study showed a high commitment to finishing college and a strong determination to succeed.
- Between 12 and 24 percent of the transfer students in this study acknowledged that they lacked confidence in their academic abilities.
- Many transfer students—up to 62 percent of respondents from four-year public institutions—wanted help preparing a written academic plan for graduation.
- Three-quarters of the respondents from four-year private and public institutions were interested in identifying work experiences and internships related to their major, as were 60 percent of the respondents from two-year public institutions.
- In an assessment of their satisfaction and dissatisfaction, the transfer students in this study across institution types rated their frequency of communication with academic advisors relatively low at 4.83 on a seven-point scale but gave higher marks to their frequency of interaction with instructors (5.57).
- Only 47 to 49 percent of respondents across institution types were able to affirm "I have the financial resources I need to finish college."

What are the implications for transfer students' success and college completion?

For insights into strategies that may help transfer students sustain their efforts toward completion, see page 10 (Appendix A).

This study examines the attitudes and motivations of a sizable sample of college transfer students at four-year private, four-year public, and two-year public institutions.



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Findings color key

4-year private institutions

4-year public institutions

2-year public institutions



See more student attitudes online

www.noellevitz.com/FreshmanReport

- 2013 National Freshman Attitudes Report
- 2013 Freshman Attitudes Report for Two-Year Colleges
- 2008-2012 National Freshman Attitude Reports with findings by students' age, race/ethnicity, and gender

www.noellevitz.com/MidYearReport

- 2012 Report: The Attitudes and Needs of Freshmen at Mid-Year

www.noellevitz.com/SecondYearAttitudes

- 2013 Report: The Attitudes of Second-Year College Students

For more information on the survey respondents, please see the Appendix on pages 18-19 and the back cover of this report.

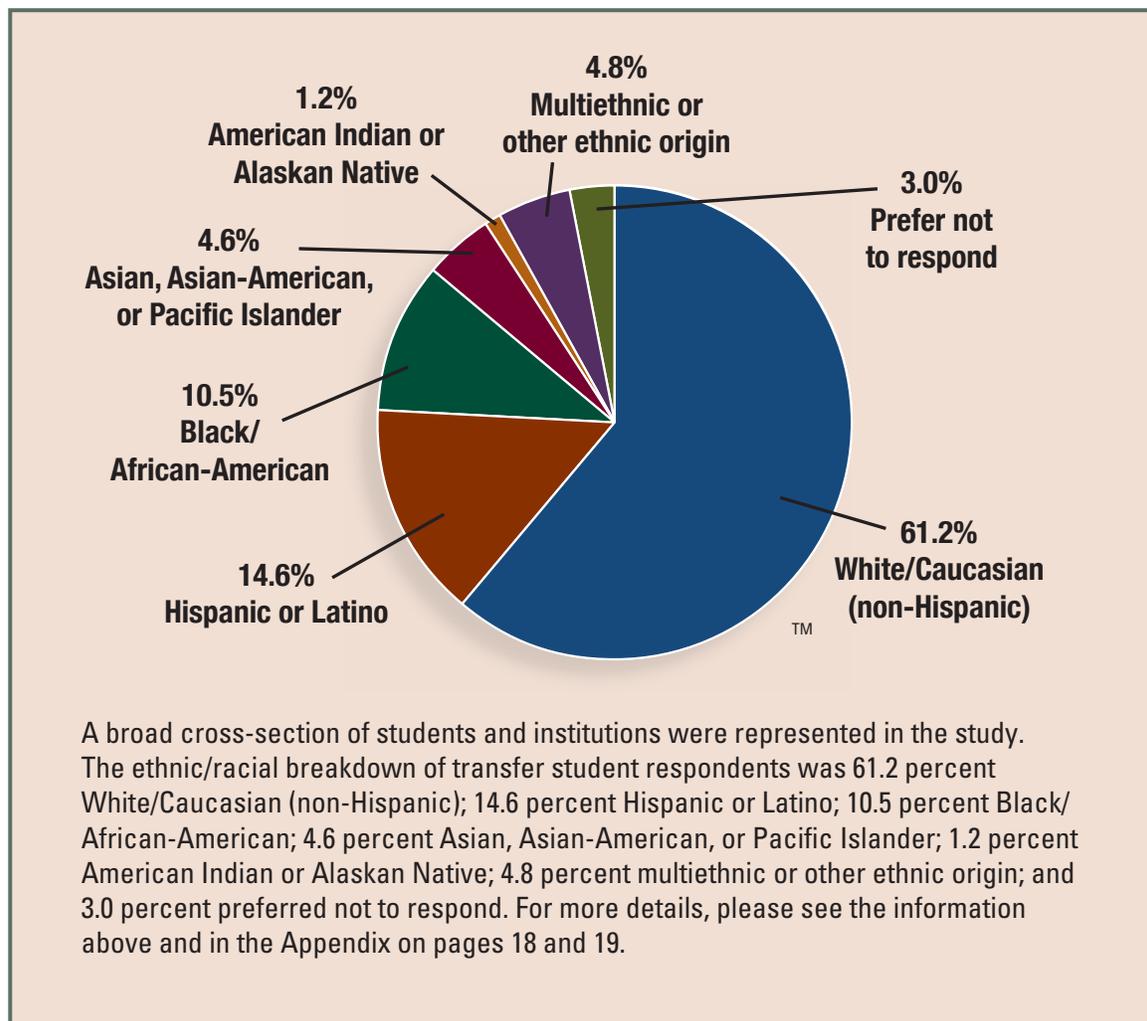
The source of data

Between 2010 and 2012, 1,708 transfer students at 72 institutions nationwide completed an online motivational survey. The survey examined a broad range of attitudes and motivations the students brought with them to their new college experience. While the majority of students in this study transferred from a community college (55 percent), 45 percent transferred from a four-year college or university.

Transfer student respondents were enrolled at a broad cross-section of institutions, with 34 percent enrolled at four-year private institutions, 30 percent enrolled at four-year public institutions, and 36 percent enrolled at two-year public institutions. Over two-thirds of the transfer students in the study were female.

The survey instrument used for this study was the Second-Year Student Assessment™, part of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus*™. By focusing on native and transfer student populations, this motivational assessment identifies students' self-reported attitudes, motivations, needs, and interests, as well as barriers and opportunities for supporting students as they transition to the second year of college.

Additional context for this study is provided in the Noel-Levitz National Freshman Attitudes Report, which examines the attitudes and motivations of first-year students, and in the Second-Year Student Attitudes Report, which looks at student attitudes and motivations for the second-year cohort overall (native and transfer students combined).



**Highlights
from the
findings**

Transfer students' commitment to continuing their education

As Table 1 shows below, 93 percent of the transfer student respondents in this study reported a strong commitment to finishing college. In addition, more than 90 percent of respondents overall reported they were "quite confident that my decision to go to college was right for me," and more than 80 percent overall indicated that the total college experience "is very rewarding."

**Table 1: Transfer students' commitment to college
(Proportions of students in agreement with each statement)**

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL percentages
I am strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in the way.	92.6%	93.1%	92.6%	92.7%
I am quite confident that my decision to go to college was right for me.	90.4%	91.7%	93.4%	91.9%
The total college experience is very rewarding.	81.4%	79.3%	82.9%	81.3%

TM

**Find
breakdowns
by sector for
all findings of
this study on
pages 12-19
(Appendix B).**

Showing strong interest in completing college, 93 percent of the transfer students in this study agreed with the statement that they are "strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in the way."

Transfer students' degree aspirations

As Table 2 shows below, this study also examined the degree aspirations of transfer students. Overall, more than 90 percent of respondents in this study aspired to a bachelor's degree or higher.

**Table 2: Highest degree planned by transfer students
(Proportions of students in agreement with each statement)**

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL percentages
One-year certificate	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Two-year certificate or associate degree	2.1%	1.4%	20.5%	8.5%
Four-year college degree (bachelor's)	34.5%	37.9%	36.3%	36.2%
Master's degree	43.1%	35.9%	29.6%	36.1%
Professional degree (medicine, dentistry, law, Ph.D., or other similar degrees)	20.1%	24.5%	12.4%	18.6%
I do not plan to complete a degree or program.	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%

TM

Many transfer students in this study planned to pursue a master's or professional degree, including more than 60 percent of the students at four-year private and public institutions and 42 percent of the students at two-year public institutions.

Academic confidence levels

Table 3 below shows most transfer students in this study tended to be academically confident, though a sizable minority were unable to affirm the statements shown.

**Table 3: Transfer students' attitudes toward academics
(Proportions of students in agreement with each statement)**

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL percentages
I am able to grasp complicated ideas.	85.2%	86.8%	91.1%	87.8%
During an exam, I'm able to concentrate and keep my thoughts well organized.	73.5%	72.6%	82.2%	76.4%
I have a good memory of the information that my instructors present in class.	80.9%	79.5%	83.8%	81.6%
I am good at figuring out what material is most important for an exam.	74.6%	75.3%	82.4%	77.6%

TM

Between 12 and 24 percent of the transfer students in this study (the inverse of the overall percentages shown above) lacked academic confidence in one or more of the above four areas.

Receptivity to academic support

Table 4 compares respondents' levels of receptivity to support services against their previous use of support services. It shows many of the students were receptive to academic support going forward.

Table 4: Transfer students' receptivity to academic assistance

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions		Students at 4-year public institutions		Students at 2-year public institutions	
	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help
Find tutors in one or more of my courses.	47.7%	22.8%	49.6%	23.4%	37.3%	20.5%
Get help with study skills (time management, taking notes, concentrating, exam skills, etc.).	41.6%	20.8%	44.4%	25.4%	35.5%	22.0%

TM

Between one-third and one-half of the transfer students in this study were receptive to academic support services as shown above. Specifically, 36 to 44 percent of transfer students indicated a desire to get help with study skills, and 37 to 50 percent indicated receptivity to tutoring. Across institution types, only approximately one-quarter of respondents or less reported receiving help in these areas at their previous institution(s).

**Highlights
from the
findings**

Academic advising needs and receptivity

Table 5 compares students' levels of receptivity to advising assistance. As before, comparisons are shown between students' receptivity to assistance at the time of completing the survey vs. assistance they received at their prior institution(s).

Table 5: Transfer students' receptivity to advising assistance

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions		Students at 4-year public institutions		Students at 2-year public institutions	
	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help
Figure out the impact of my grades on my desired major.	58.7%	30.1%	64.5%	32.7%	50.6%	33.8%
Prepare a written academic plan for graduation.	58.7%	27.4%	62.3%	26.4%	49.7%	24.5%
Select an academic program or major.	31.3%	48.8%	41.5%	51.6%	30.6%	44.7%
Discuss transfer questions and issues.	37.0%	47.3%	38.7%	44.4%	57.5%	36.6%

What are the implications of these findings? See some reflections and recommendations on pages 10 and 11.

The greatest gap: Many transfer students wanted help with preparing a written academic plan for graduation and reported they hadn't received that help at their previous institution(s). This finding held true across institution types and was the greatest single gap identified among 15 survey items (see Appendix page 14).

Transfer students' levels of satisfaction with advising and instruction (institutional impressions)

Table 6 below shows selected findings on transfer students' satisfaction from the Appendix on page 17, including two of the highest-rated items and one of the lowest-rated items.

Table 6: Transfer students' satisfaction with advising and instruction (Figures indicate the mean satisfaction levels on a seven-point scale: 1=low satisfaction, 7=high satisfaction)

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL mean
Frequency of communication with my academic advisor	4.97	4.65	4.83	4.83
Frequency of interactions with my instructors	5.57	5.34	5.77	5.57
Degree of academic challenge in my classes here	5.75	5.67	5.81	5.75

The transfer students in this study appeared to be somewhat dissatisfied with their frequency of communication with academic advisors, rating it relatively low at 4.83 overall on a seven-point scale. In contrast, the students gave relatively high satisfaction ratings to their frequency of interaction with instructors and to the "degree of academic challenge in my classes."

Career needs and receptivity to career assistance

Table 7 below shows many students wanted assistance with their career decision and opportunities to experience their career area. Most transfer students in this study (82 to 88 percent) had already selected a major as shown in the Appendix on page 19.

Table 7: Receptivity to career assistance

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions		Students at 4-year public institutions		Students at 2-year public institutions	
	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help
Explore advantages and disadvantages of my career choice.	62.3%	27.0%	65.8%	29.5%	47.0%	29.8%
Identify work experiences or internships related to my major.	75.7%	22.9%	77.6%	23.2%	59.6%	23.2%

TM

Approximately one-half to two-thirds of respondents indicated they wanted to explore the advantages and disadvantages of their career choice. In addition, 60 to 78 percent were seeking to identify work experiences or internships related to their major.

Satisfaction with career-related experiences (institutional impressions)

Table 8 below shows two more findings on transfer students' satisfaction. For the complete findings on transfer student satisfaction, please see the Appendix on page 17.

Table 8: Satisfaction with career-related experiences (Figures indicate the mean satisfaction levels on a seven-point scale: 1=low satisfaction, 7=high satisfaction)

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL mean
Opportunities to get involved in activities and events associated with my (desired) major	5.27	4.94	4.85	5.02
Availability of service learning, internships, and/or other work experiences associated with my career interests	5.16	4.76	4.66	4.86

TM

Transfer students reported moderate levels of satisfaction with opportunities to get involved in activities or events related to their major and with the availability of service learning, internships, and/or other work experiences related to their career interests.

Attitudes toward finance-related issues

Table 9 below shows a substantial portion of respondents brought concerns about finances.

**Table 9: Transfer students' attitudes toward finances
(Proportions of students in agreement with each statement)**

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL percentages
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	48.5%	46.7%	48.0%	47.8%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my studies.	45.5%	43.2%	46.4%	45.1%

TM

Students' responses overall showed that nearly half did not believe they had the financial resources needed to finish college, with a similar proportion reporting they had financial problems that interfered with their studies. Most transfer students indicated relatively low satisfaction with the adequacy of financial resources available to them across institution types (see the Appendix, page 17.)

Receptivity to financial assistance

Table 10 shows that more than half of respondents wanted to discuss options for financing their education, while between one-third and one-half of respondents wanted to find ways to balance school and work.

Table 10: Transfer students' receptivity to financial assistance

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions		Students at 4-year public institutions		Students at 2-year public institutions	
	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help	Students who would like to receive help going forward	Students who reported they previously received help
Discuss options for financing my education.	60.2%	37.1%	62.9%	34.6%	54.5%	35.6%
Find ways to balance the demands of school with work.	43.0%	18.8%	46.4%	21.8%	36.1%	19.9%

TM

For both items above, there was a substantial difference between students' receptivity to assistance at the time of completing the survey vs. assistance they received at their prior institution(s). For the amount of time students expected to work at a job while enrolled in classes, please see the Appendix on page 18.

Expectations for transferring

Table 11 compares the proportion of respondents who indicated they planned to stay vs. transfer again or stop out, along with those who were unsure of their plans.

**Table 11: Transfer students' college or program completion plans
(Proportions of students in agreement with each statement)**

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL percentages
I plan to complete my degree at this college or university.	93.8%	93.7%	54.6%	79.6%
I plan to transfer to another college or university to complete my degree.	4.8%	4.5%	42.3%	18.3%
I do not plan to re-enroll in college next term.	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
I have not made a decision about my plans to re-enroll in college next term.	1.0%	1.4%	2.9%	1.8%

TM

Almost 94 percent of the respondents from four-year private and public institutions planned to complete their degree "at this college or university," while 42 percent of the respondents from two-year public institutions planned to transfer.

Expectations for studying

Table 12 shows most transfer students expected to study more at their new institution than they had previously.

**Table 12: The amount of time transfer students expect to study
(Proportions of students in agreement with each statement)**

Selected survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL percentages
I think I will need to study about the same amount as I did last year.	22.9%	31.6%	38.1%	31.0%
I think I will need to study more than I did last year.	74.9%	64.1%	58.0%	65.6%

TM

Overall, two-thirds of transfer students (66 percent) recognized the need to study more than they had the previous year, with slightly less than a third indicating they would need to study about the same amount.

Appendix A: Reflections and actions to consider

With increased federal, state, and institutional emphasis on degree completion, practitioners are encouraged to examine the motivations and needs of the growing population of transfer students and develop strategies to promote their success.

Studies have shown significant student mobility (commonly known as “swirl”) among two-year and four-year campuses, with one-third of all students transferring at least once before earning a degree (Hossler et al., 2012). The same report found that the highest rate of transfer occurs in the second year.

As the phenomenon of student swirl continues, transfer students—with their unique attitudes and needs—will increasingly be a major segment of the student body on many campuses. Whether they persist and ultimately graduate depends on a complex combination of factors. How can a transfer student’s motivation to finish college be nurtured and sustained? How can a student’s resilience be developed and focused to navigate increasing academic and social demands in light of the new landscape? Research suggests that retention and graduation rates should not be the only measure of student success (Schreiner et. al., 2012). The authors advance the theoretical concept of thriving—doing more than merely surviving college and graduating—with students engaged in higher-level thinking, setting goals, establishing social connectedness, facing academic challenges with a positive attitude, and displaying mature emotional behaviors.

The holistic data in this report encourages the identification of attitudes, motivations, needs, and behaviors in unmasking the forces that influence transfer student success. To help more students not only thrive but reach completion and graduation, it is critical to meet the complex needs of all types of students through a strategic, measured, and data-informed approach. This includes responding directly to students’ self-reported needs for advising, academic, and career services, using data about each student’s receptivity to assistance, and developing intervention programs based on the needs of specific student cohorts.

As this report suggests, understanding transfer students’ attitudes, receptivity, and motivations is the first step in supporting their needs. When motivational variables are carefully quantified and monitored, they can be used to guide and focus successful interventions that form pathways to student success.

The key, as with retaining native students, is to develop student success programs based on the unique needs of individual transfer students and their unique cohorts. These programs may include:

- Orientation programs tailored specifically for transfer students, addressing concerns such as transfer of credit, finances, major-related internships, and meaningful work experiences, including year-round programs and services;
- Programs to connect transfer students to faculty, staff, and native students within academic or co-curricular interest areas to further engage them in the learning experience;
- Peer mentors for transfer students;
- Assignment of students to an advisor within their major/area of interest with an early focus on confirming or further refining their academic plan;
- An advising center devoted to transfer students;
- Career fairs for students who are undecided about a major; and
- Academic support services based on areas of student need and receptivity.

Reflections and actions continued...

Programs that are required, rather than optional, are likely to benefit more students. When differentiated from first-year or second-year experience courses and designed exclusively for transfer students, the required programs can even become marketing benefits to assist in increasing the transfer population.

How do your institution's transfer students compare on the metrics presented in this report? How can you better use data from your students to bolster their success?

As you explore the attitudes and needs of your transfer students, find ways to reach out to them and help them adjust and focus on reaching their goals. While they may not have all of the same concerns as first-year students, they do need to learn about and receive resources that will support their transition.

Five additional observations

1. Many students in this study were seeking advanced degrees, making a written plan for achieving their goals especially important. When viewed alongside the students' concerns about financing, satisfaction with financial aid, and the level of satisfaction with advising, an understanding of why this plan is so important to students becomes clear.
2. Transfer students exhibit similar levels of academic confidence as second-year students. However, studies indicate that they may experience a period of academic adjustment known as transfer shock—a temporary dip in GPA (Keeley and House, 1993).
3. The importance of student engagement with instructors, both inside and outside the classroom, is well-documented as a key ingredient for student success from the time students enter college until they complete their program of study. Engagement involves feeling connected with the subject matter via interaction with the instructor.
4. All students, and particularly those who transferred for academic reasons (a particular major, class size, etc.), should be aware of the study habits of successful students, particularly those within their own major.
5. Aggregated, students with receptivity to academic support services, lower academic confidence, and those indicating a commitment to studying that is less than or equal to what they did at their previous institution may especially benefit from timely attention in the form of focused interventions.

References

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Appendix B: Complete findings

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Complete findings of this study appear in this section as follows:

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Table I: Non-cognitive, attitudinal measures of transfer students

Twenty-seven transfer student attitudes are shown in the table below.

Percent of transfer students in agreement

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL percentages
Academic confidence				
I am able to grasp complicated ideas.	85.2%	86.8%	91.1%	87.8%
During an exam, I'm able to concentrate and keep my thoughts well organized.	73.5%	72.6%	82.2%	76.4%
I have a good memory of the information that my instructors present in class.	80.9%	79.5%	83.8%	81.6%
I am good at figuring out what material is most important for an exam.	74.6%	75.3%	82.4%	77.6%
Commitment to college				
I am strongly dedicated to finishing college—no matter what obstacles get in the way.	92.6%	93.1%	92.6%	92.7%
I am quite confident that my decision to go to college was right for me.	90.4%	91.7%	93.4%	91.9%
Of all the things I could do at this point in my life, going to college is definitely the most satisfying.	83.2%	81.7%	84.0%	83.0%
The total college experience is very rewarding.	81.4%	79.3%	82.9%	81.3%

RATING SCALE								
NOT AT ALL TRUE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	COMPLETELY TRUE

For the items in Table I, agreement was defined as the aggregated number of students who selected a rating of 5, 6, or 7.

Table I continued...

Percent of transfer students in agreement

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL percentages
Engaged learning				
I feel as though I'm learning things in my classes that are worthwhile to me as a person.	86.1%	85.6%	90.6%	87.6%
I can usually find ways of applying what I'm learning in class to something else in my life.	83.8%	83.4%	88.4%	85.4%
I find myself thinking about what I'm learning in class even when I'm not in class.	77.5%	83.4%	87.9%	83.0%
I feel energized by the ideas I'm learning in most of my classes.	79.0%	79.3%	85.6%	81.5%
Leadership				
Most people have a lot of trust in my judgment and opinions.	90.5%	87.6%	91.8%	90.1%
Many people consider me an effective leader and look to me for direction.	74.9%	76.1%	82.7%	78.1%
When I'm in a group, others often turn to me as the group's leader.	69.6%	70.8%	76.4%	72.4%
Over the years, I have frequently been selected as a spokesperson or group leader.	60.0%	60.4%	64.8%	61.8%
Transition				
I feel comfortable with the changes in lifestyle that occur in college.	82.8%	82.8%	85.3%	83.7%
It has been easy for me to adapt to my college living arrangements.	78.2%	77.5%	76.4%	77.3%
I feel good about the way I have adapted to the college social environment.	74.6%	71.0%	78.4%	74.9%
I have many friends and feel at home here.	66.3%	59.6%	68.7%	65.2%
It has been easy for me to make friends in college.	63.1%	59.2%	64.3%	62.4%
Family support				
My family respects my judgment on most decisions.	84.0%	81.5%	83.0%	82.9%
I have always felt that the rest of my family was firmly behind me.	83.5%	81.9%	80.3%	81.9%
My family and I understand each other's point of view.	77.5%	78.7%	79.8%	78.7%
I feel comfortable discussing important issues with my family.	81.8%	83.4%	85.1%	83.5%
Financial security				
I have the financial resources that I need to finish college.	48.5%	46.7%	48.0%	47.8%
I don't have any financial problems that will interfere with my studies.	45.5%	43.2%	46.4%	45.1%

Table II: Transfer students' receptivity to assistance by institution type

The following table shows students' receptivity to the assistance at the time of completing the survey (A), students who reported they had previously received the assistance (B), and the difference between the two measures (A-B).

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions			Students at 4-year public institutions			Students at 2-year public institutions		
	Students who would like to receive help going forward (A)	Students who reported they previously received help (B)	Difference (A-B)	Students who would like to receive help going forward (A)	Students who reported they previously received help (B)	Difference (A-B)	Students who would like to receive help going forward (A)	Students who reported they previously received help (B)	Difference (A-B)
Receptivity to academic assistance									
Find tutors in one or more of my courses.	47.7%	22.8%	24.9%	49.6%	23.4%	26.2%	37.3%	20.5%	16.8%
Get help with study skills (time management, taking notes, concentrating, exam skills, etc.).	41.6%	20.8%	20.8%	44.4%	25.4%	19.0%	35.5%	22.0%	13.4%
Receptivity to advising									
Figure out the impact of my grades on my desired major.	58.7%	30.1%	28.6%	64.5%	32.7%	31.9%	50.6%	33.8%	16.8%
Prepare a written academic plan for graduation.	58.7%	27.4%	31.3%	62.3%	26.4%	35.9%	49.7%	24.5%	25.2%
Select an academic program or major.	31.3%	48.8%	-17.4%	41.5%	51.6%	-10.1%	30.6%	44.7%	-14.1%
Discuss transfer questions and issues.	37.0%	47.3%	-10.3%	38.7%	44.4%	-5.6%	57.5%	36.6%	20.8%
Receptivity to career planning									
Identify work experiences or internships related to my major.	75.7%	22.9%	52.9%	77.6%	23.2%	54.4%	59.6%	23.2%	36.5%
Define goals suited to my major or career interest(s).	63.4%	34.6%	28.8%	67.2%	36.7%	30.5%	50.8%	31.3%	19.4%
Explore advantages and disadvantages of my career choice.	62.3%	27.0%	35.4%	65.8%	29.5%	36.2%	47.0%	29.8%	17.2%

I would like to receive assistance this year.			I received assistance last year.	
YES	NO		YES	NO
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Find tutors in one or more of my courses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

A simple yes/no rating scale was used for the items in Tables II and III, as shown in this example.

Table II continued...

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions			Students at 4-year public institutions			Students at 2-year public institutions		
	Students who would like to receive help going forward (A)	Students who reported they previously received help (B)	Difference (A-B)	Students who would like to receive help going forward (A)	Students who reported they previously received help (B)	Difference (A-B)	Students who would like to receive help going forward (A)	Students who reported they previously received help (B)	Difference (A-B)
Receptivity to assistance with finances									
Discuss options for financing my education.	60.2%	37.1%	23.0%	62.9%	34.6%	28.3%	54.5%	35.6%	18.9%
Find better ways to manage my personal finances, including loans, work, and credit cards.	45.7%	17.9%	27.9%	48.7%	18.7%	29.9%	43.4%	16.5%	26.9%
Find ways to balance the demands of school with work.	43.0%	18.8%	24.3%	46.4%	21.8%	24.6%	36.1%	19.9%	16.2%
Receptivity to personal support and counseling									
Find ways to deal with emotional tensions that are bothering me.	28.0%	13.8%	14.3%	28.5%	13.0%	15.5%	26.9%	11.4%	15.5%
Discuss difficulties in my personal relationships and social life.	25.7%	15.0%	10.7%	29.3%	13.4%	15.9%	21.8%	10.2%	11.6%
Receive help with family issues that are distracting to me.	19.1%	10.4%	8.8%	21.8%	7.7%	14.1%	20.6%	8.9%	11.8%

Table III: Transfer students' receptivity to assistance overall

The table below continues examining transfer students' receptivity to assistance, with a shift in focus to the overall percentages for respondents in this study.

All survey items	Overall percentages		
	Students who would like to receive help going forward (A)	Students who reported they previously received help (B)	Difference (A-B)
Receptivity to academic assistance			
Find tutors in one or more of my courses.	44.5%	22.1%	22.4%
Get help with study skills (time management, taking notes, concentrating, exam skills, etc.).	40.2%	22.6%	17.6%
Receptivity to advising			
Figure out the impact of my grades on my desired major.	57.5%	32.2%	25.3%
Prepare a written academic plan for graduation.	56.6%	26.1%	30.5%
Select an academic program or major.	34.1%	48.2%	-14.0%
Discuss transfer questions and issues.	44.9%	42.6%	2.3%
Receptivity to career planning			
Identify work experiences or internships related to my major.	70.5%	23.1%	47.4%
Explore advantages and disadvantages of my career choice.	57.9%	28.8%	29.1%
Define goals suited to my major or career interest(s).	60.0%	34.1%	25.9%
Receptivity to assistance with finances			
Discuss options for financing my education.	59.0%	35.8%	23.1%
Find better ways to manage my personal finances, including loans, work, and credit cards.	45.8%	17.6%	28.1%
Find ways to balance the demands of school with work.	41.6%	20.1%	21.5%
Receptivity to personal support and counseling			
Find ways to deal with emotional tensions that are bothering me.	27.8%	12.7%	15.1%
Discuss difficulties in my personal relationships and social life.	25.4%	12.8%	12.6%
Receive help with family issues that are distracting to me.	20.5%	9.0%	11.4%

Table IV: Transfer student satisfaction (institutional impressions)

This table shows the mean satisfaction scores of student respondents to 13 survey items using the seven-point scale shown below.

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL mean
Degree of academic challenge in my classes here	5.75	5.67	5.81	5.75
My overall experience as a student at this institution	5.64	5.43	5.82	5.64
Frequency of interactions with my instructors	5.57	5.34	5.77	5.57
Variety of majors available here	5.62	5.48	5.45	5.52
Variety of courses available in my (desired) major	5.54	5.40	5.30	5.41
Opportunities to get involved in activities and events associated with my (desired) major	5.27	4.94	4.85	5.02
Social life (both on and off campus)	5.18	5.00	5.10	5.10
Level of interaction with other students	5.18	4.98	5.21	5.13
Sense of belonging to the college community	5.16	4.89	5.15	5.08
Availability of service learning, internships, and/or other work experiences associated with my career interests	5.16	4.76	4.66	4.86
Leadership opportunities in student government and other organizations	5.05	4.83	4.86	4.92
Frequency of communication with my academic advisor	4.97	4.65	4.83	4.83
Adequacy of financial assistance available to me	4.55	4.49	4.88	4.65

RATING SCALE								
VERY DISSATISFIED	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	VERY SATISFIED

The figures shown in Table IV are the mean responses to this seven-point scale.

Table V: Respondent demographics, enrollment status, and enrollment plans

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL
Number of respondents	582	507	619	1,708
Percent of respondents	34.1%	29.7%	36.2%	
Racial/ethnic origin				
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.7%	2.2%	0.8%	1.2%
Asian, Asian-American, or Pacific Islander	8.4%	2.6%	2.6%	4.6%
Black/African-American	9.1%	15.8%	7.6%	10.5%
White/Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	63.7%	56.2%	63.0%	61.2%
Hispanic or Latino	9.1%	13.6%	20.7%	14.6%
Multiethnic or other ethnic origin	5.5%	5.7%	3.4%	4.8%
Prefer not to respond	3.4%	3.9%	1.9%	3.0%
Time expecting to spend at work while enrolled in classes				
0 (I do not work)	37.3%	38.3%	31.5%	35.5%
1 to 10 hours per week	18.4%	13.6%	10.3%	14.1%
11 to 20 hours per week	21.3%	18.5%	14.5%	18.0%
21 to 30 hours per week	11.0%	13.0%	14.2%	12.8%
31 to 40 hours per week	8.1%	8.9%	13.2%	10.2%
Over 40 hours per week	4.0%	7.7%	16.2%	9.5%
Current GPA				
3.5 – 4.0	37.5%	34.9%	46.7%	40.0%
2.5 – 3.49	53.4%	52.5%	46.0%	50.5%
1.5 – 2.49	7.9%	11.6%	6.9%	8.7%
1.0 – 1.49	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%
Less than 1.0	0.7%	0.6%	0.0%	0.4%
Type of transfer				
I transferred here from a community college.	56.4%	63.7%	46.2%	54.9%
I transferred here from a four-year college or university.	43.6%	36.3%	53.8%	45.1%
Combined, current total number of college credits earned at previous institution(s) and at current institution				
0 – 15 credits	5.0%	4.7%	4.0%	4.6%
16 – 30 credits	13.1%	12.4%	10.7%	12.0%
31 – 45 credits	33.2%	23.9%	25.0%	27.5%
46 – 60 credits	29.7%	30.8%	25.4%	28.5%
More than 60 credits	19.1%	28.2%	34.9%	27.5%

Table V continued...

All survey items	Students at 4-year private institutions	Students at 4-year public institutions	Students at 2-year public institutions	OVERALL percentages
Number of classes currently enrolled in at other institutions while enrolled at this institution				
None	88.0%	84.6%	86.8%	86.5%
One class	0.9%	0.6%	3.2%	1.6%
Two classes	0.9%	3.9%	3.2%	2.6%
Three classes	2.1%	2.4%	2.4%	2.3%
More than three classes	8.2%	8.5%	4.4%	6.9%
Study plans				
I don't think I will need to study as much as I did last year.	2.2%	4.3%	3.9%	3.5%
I think I will need to study about the same amount as I did last year.	22.9%	31.6%	38.1%	31.0%
I think I will need to study more than I did last year.	74.9%	64.1%	58.0%	65.6%
Current decision on the selection of a major or program				
I plan to continue with the major I have selected.	88.0%	81.7%	86.6%	85.6%
I have selected a major, but I'm thinking about changing it.	8.6%	10.8%	6.3%	8.4%
I'm actively engaged in the process of selecting a major.	3.3%	5.5%	3.9%	4.2%
I have some potential majors in mind but haven't explored them yet.	0.2%	2.0%	2.7%	1.6%
Highest degree planned				
One-year certificate	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Two-year certificate or associate degree	2.1%	1.4%	20.5%	8.5%
Four-year college degree (bachelor's)	34.5%	37.9%	36.3%	36.2%
Master's degree	43.1%	35.9%	29.6%	36.1%
Professional degree (medicine, dentistry, law, Ph.D., or other similar degrees)	20.1%	24.5%	12.4%	18.6%
I do not plan to complete a degree or program.	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Other	0.0%	0.4%	0.8%	0.4%
Current college or program completion plan				
I plan to complete my degree at this college or university.	93.8%	93.7%	54.6%	79.6%
I plan to transfer to another college or university to complete my degree.	4.8%	4.5%	42.3%	18.3%
I do not plan to re-enroll in college next term.	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
I have not made a decision about my plans to re-enroll in college next term.	1.0%	1.4%	2.9%	1.8%

To see a sample of the 68-item student survey used in this study, please visit www.noellevitz.com/RMSPlus

Questions? Want additional information?

If you have questions about this report, or if you would like to discuss how an attitudinal student survey can support student success and persistence on your campus, please contact Jo Hillman at jo-hillman@noellevitz.com. Additionally, please call Jo at 1-800-876-1117, ext. 2109, or 720-482-2109 to learn more about how the early-alert assessments of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus*[™] (RMS *Plus*) help campuses focus early individual interventions with at-risk students.

About Noel-Levitz and the early-alert survey instrument used in this study

Noel-Levitz has served the higher education community for 40 years. Campus leaders turn to Noel-Levitz for consultation and resources for student recruitment, student retention, marketing, and strategic enrollment planning. More than 2,800 colleges and universities throughout North America have used Noel-Levitz services.

The data in this report are drawn from Noel-Levitz's 68-item, Second-Year Student Assessment (SYSA), part of the Noel-Levitz Retention Management System *Plus*. Student respondents, including transfer students, complete this survey near the beginning of the second year of college or near the end of their first year. Immediately upon the survey's completion, findings are reported electronically to the respondents' college or university for early and ongoing identification of student needs.

Two companion surveys to the SYSA are also available. The College Student Inventory (CSI) is the original survey in the series. It alerts campuses to the needs of incoming first-year students. In addition, the Mid-Year Student Assessment (MYSAs) identifies changes in first-year students' attitudes and motivation at the mid-point of the first year.

Using the findings of these surveys, educators are able to engage students in timely conversations and to proactively connect students with key services that make a difference. To see sample copies of these assessments, please visit www.noellevitz.com/RMSPlus.

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How to cite this report

Noel-Levitz (2013). *The Attitudes and Motivations of College Transfer Students*. Coralville, Iowa: Author. Retrieved from www.noellevitz.com/TransferStudentAttitudes.

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