

Northwestern Connecticut Community College
Office of Institutional Research
Fall 2006 New Student Survey
Executive Summary

- The Connecticut Community College New Student Survey is designed to collect detailed information from incoming students regarding their reasons for attending the college, their goals while enrolled, and their expectations for skills development while attending.
- In Fall 2006, all new students attending an orientation session were asked to complete the survey. Students who did not attend an orientation session or did not complete the survey received a copy of the survey in the mail. A total of 153 students completed the survey during orientation and an additional 64 students completed and returned the mailed survey, for an overall response rate of approximately 42%. The decision to distribute the surveys both in person at orientation and by mail was driven by decreasing response rates, over the past several years, to the mailed survey. As the response rate was significantly improved using this approach (up to 42% from a low of 15% the previous year) we anticipate using a similar approach in the future.
- Survey respondents resembled the overall new student population in terms of gender and race, with the majority being white (93%) and female (58%) Respondents were slightly more likely than the overall new student population to be full-time and matriculated. Respondents were also slightly younger, on average, than the total new student population (26 vs 27).
- As has been consistently noted in previous years, word of mouth continues to be one of the College's best forms of advertising. Over half (53%) of respondents indicated that they became aware of NCCC through a friend or relative. An additional 23% first learned of the college through a school counselor or teacher. Twelve percent noted becoming aware of Northwestern through a college publication, while 10% reported learning of the college through Internet research. Relatively few (6% total) reported learning of the college through newspaper, radio or television advertisements.
- Most new students are employed (24% fulltime and 48% part-time) and intend to pay for their education themselves (48%) or with the help of their parents (50%) or financial aid (26%). Most (74%) reported personal earnings of less than \$20,000 per year. The majority are also first-generation college students, with 60% reporting that neither parent holds a bachelor's degree.
- Despite the fact that many students fall into low-income categories, the vast majority (92%) of respondents indicated that they have Internet access at home. Many respondents indicated an interest in taking an online class (47%) or utilizing online academic advising services (53%), and more than half (66%) reported an interest in online course registration.
- Over one-quarter (27%) of respondents cited an associate degree or certificate as their primary goal while enrolled at the college. An additional 35% indicated a primary goal of transferring, either with or without an associate degree.

- The most commonly cited reasons for choosing to attend NCCC include mix of courses/programs offered (40%), proximity to home/location (55%) and affordability (43%). Transferability of credits (25%) and advice given by friends or relatives (16%) were also frequently cited reasons.
- Most respondents (71%) indicated that they hope to develop career-enhancing skills while enrolled at Northwestern. Thirty percent hope to increase self-confidence, and just under one-quarter (24%) hope to develop critical thinking and/or problem-solving skills.
- Most respondents (70% or more) reported that they prefer to take classes meeting Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays or Thursdays. Just under one-third (28%) indicated an interest in Friday classes, while only 9% indicated an interest in classes meeting on Saturdays or Sundays.
- Mid-morning (10 AM-noon) is the most favored class meeting time, with over half (52%) indicating a preference for this time slot. Early morning (8-10 AM) and late afternoon/twilight (5-7 PM) classes are the preference of about 30% of respondents. Least favorite is the 2-5 PM time slot, with only 15% indicating a preference.