

New Student Freshman Profile

Executive Summary

A 34-question online survey was conducted with students when they enrolled for summer orientation, yielding 874 valid sets of responses from 1454 students who registered (60% response rate). Survey questions asked about demographic information, high school experiences, and MSU expectations. Survey and demographic data were analyzed using R, a statistical package.

Demographic information

Survey respondents were predominantly female (68%). 42.8% of respondents are first-generation college students, coming from homes where neither parent completed a college degree of any kind.

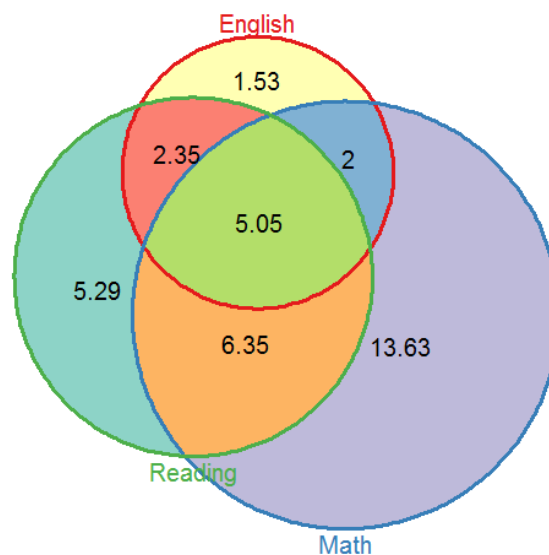
Respondents came from 23 states, although the most common locations were from Kentucky, northwestern Tennessee, the St. Louis area, and southern Illinois and Indiana. The following table shows the top 20 locations for respondents by county and state.

State and County	Percentage of respondents
KY - Calloway	7.6%
KY - Jefferson	5.5%
KY - Graves	5.3%
KY - McCracken	3.9%
KY - Marshall	3.1%
MO - St. Louis	2.6%
KY - Daviess	2.3%
KY - Trigg	2.3%
KY - Henderson	2.2%
IN - Warrick	2.1%
TN - Shelby	1.9%
KY - Oldham	1.8%
KY - Christian	1.7%
TN - Henry	1.6%
KY - Hopkins	1.6%
KY - Muhlenberg	1.6%
IN - Vanderburgh	1.6%
IL - Madison	1.4%
KY - Logan	1.4%
KY - Union	1.1%
TN - Madison	1.1%
KY - Bullitt	1.1%
KY - Fulton	1.1%

The average high school GPA is 3.44 (SD 0.55) and ranges from 1.75 to 5.05, with females outperforming males by nearly two tenths of a point. ACT scores ranged from 15 to 36 (composite), 11 to 36 (English), 13 to 36 (math), 11 to 36 (reading), and 12 to 36 (science). While males have almost a point higher average score on the math section of the ACT, the mean for English scores is just over a point higher and almost a point higher in reading for females.

	Number of Respondents	Composite ACT Score (Mean, Std. Dev.)	English ACT Score (Mean, Std. Dev.)	Math ACT Score (Mean, Std. Dev.)	Reading ACT Score (Mean, Std. Dev.)	High School GPA (Mean, Std. Dev.)
Male	280	22.90, 4.1	22.77, 5.1	22.79, 4.3	23.67, 5.3	3.31, 0.6
Female	591	22.96, 4.1	23.88, 5.1	21.81, 4.2	24.59, 5.2	3.50, 0.5

The total number of students requiring some form of remediation based on ACT sub-scores is 36.2% of respondents who have ACT data. The following Venn diagram displays the respondents requiring remediation in each of the three subject areas of concern. The area requiring most remediation is clearly math (23.03%, while reading and English are at 19.04% and 10.93%, respectively). Of the students requiring remediation in any area, 43.51% require remediation in another area. Of those students requiring remediation in English, 86.02% also require remediation in at least one other area (67.74% in reading, 64.52% in math, and 46.24% in both).



High school experiences

The majority of respondents spent between 1 to 5 hours per week on most academic and extracurricular activities during the last year of high school. The most common response for each of the following activities is listed in the table below:

Activity	Amount of time per week	Percent of respondents
Assigned reading	1-5 hours	62%
Assigned writing	1-5 hours	56%
Math and quantitative reasoning	1-5 hours	42%
Laboratory or field work	1-5 hours	45%
Foreign language study	0 hours	60%
Practice and/or rehearsal	0 hours	32%
Preparing for class	1-5 hours	54%
Working for pay	0 hours	35%
Co-curricular activities	1-5 hours	27%
Volunteering	1-5 hours	51%
Relaxing and socializing	6-10 hours	37%

We surveyed respondents about how frequently they engaged in certain behaviors during the last year of school. The most common response for each of the following activities is listed in the table below:

Behavior	Frequency	Percent of respondents
Came to class without completing readings or assignments	sometimes	49%
Prepared 2 or more drafts of an assignment before submission	sometimes	42%
Reaching conclusions based on own analysis of numerical information	often	40%
Used numerical information to examine a real-world issue	sometimes	41%
Evaluated what others have concluded from numeral information	sometimes	44%
Identified key information from reading assignments	often	47%
Reviewed notes after class	often	40%
Summarized what was learned in class or from class materials	often	42%
Included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments	often	39%
Examined the strengths and weaknesses of own views of a topic	often	40%
Tried to understand another's view by imagining how an issue looks from that perspective	often	41%

Respondents typically wrote a small number of shorter papers in their final year of high school, with most students producing only 1 to 2 papers of up to 5 pages and 1 to 2 papers between 6 to 10 pages long.

Most respondents either did not take advanced placement courses (33%) or only took 1 to 2 advanced placement courses (34%); additionally, most respondents either did not take college or university courses for credit in high school (40%) or took only 1 to 2 college or university courses for credit (32%). 48% of respondents felt that their last year of high school courses challenged them quite a bit to do their best work.

Respondents also indicated how involved they were in extracurricular activities, with athletics and volunteer work topping the list. The most common response for each of the following activities is listed in the table below:

Activity	Frequency	Percent of respondents
Performing or visual arts	Not at all	39%
Athletic teams	Very much	33%
Student government	Not at all	63%
Publications	Not at all	66%
Academic clubs or honor societies	Not at all	34%
Vocational clubs	Not at all	61%
Religious youth groups	Not at all	38%
Community service or volunteer work	Some	28%
Entrepreneurship	Not at all	69%
Providing care for family	Not at all	35%

33% of respondents have received technical training prior to coming to MSU; 6.5% have started or run a small business.

MSU expectations

Overwhelmingly, respondents indicate that Murray State was their first choice (80%), and they expect to graduate from Murray State (96%).

Of our respondents, 12% are currently undeclared. Of those who have declared majors, 118 majors are represented. STEM majors comprise 26% and STEM-H comprise 52% of respondents who have declared majors. The ten most popular majors can be seen in the following table:

Major	Percentage of respondents
Undeclared-degree seeking	12%
Nursing	11%
Elementary Education	5%
Animal Tech/Vet Tech/Pre-Vet	4.8%
Biology/Pre-Medical	3.3%
Psychology	3%
Animal Tech/Animal/Equine	2.5%
Animal Tech/Veterinary Tech	2.3%
Music Education/Instrumental	1.9%
Accounting	1.8%

Respondents predicted how much time they anticipate spending on academic and extracurricular activities during their first year at Murray State. The most common response for each of the following activities is listed in the table below:

Activity	Amount of time per week	Percent of respondents	Change from high school experience
Assigned reading	6-10 hours	38%	increase
Assigned writing	6-10 hours	40%	increase
Math and quantitative reasoning	6-10 hours	39%	increase
Laboratory or field work	1-5 hours	35%	no change
Foreign language study	0 hours	44%	no change
Practice and/or rehearsal	0 hours	42%	no change
Preparing for class	6-10 hours	29%	increase
Working for pay	11-15 hours	20%	increase
Co-curricular activities	1-5 hours	33%	no change
Volunteering	1-5 hours	52%	no change
Relaxing and socializing	6-10 hours	39%	no change

Respondents anticipated how frequently they would engage in certain behaviors during their first year at Murray State. The most common response for each of the following activities is listed in the table below:

Behavior	Frequency	Percent of respondents
Ask for help from learning center or tutor	sometimes	47%
Ask for help from another student	sometimes	43%
Ask for help from a faculty member	sometimes	48%
Explain coursework to other students	sometimes	57%
Prepare for exams with other students in study group	often	44%
Work with other students on projects/assignments	often	50%
Work with faculty on activities other than coursework	sometimes	51%
Discuss your academic performance with faculty	sometimes	45%
Discuss course content with faculty outside of class	sometimes	55%
Choose not to attend class	never	91%
Came to class without completing readings or assignments	never	84%
Prepared 2 or more drafts of an assignment before submission	often	45%

Respondents were very positive about the likelihood in engaging in behavior linked to being successful in college, reporting that they were somewhat or very certain for the following positive academic behaviors.

Behavior	Certainty	Percentage of respondents
Study when there are more interesting things to do	somewhat certain	55%
Find additional information for course assignments when you don't understand the material	very certain	62%

Participate in course discussions, even when you don't feel like it	somewhat certain	52%
Ask for help when you struggle with assignments	very certain	72%
Finish something you have started when you encounter challenges	very certain	67%
Stay positive, even when you do poorly on a test or assignment	very certain	53%

Respondents were also positive about how difficult they might find common university challenges, reporting that social challenges were not at all difficult, and academic challenges ranged from a little difficult to somewhat difficult. Many respondents indicate that paying colleges expenses would be very difficult.

MSU experience	Level of difficulty	Percentage of respondents
Learning course material	somewhat difficult	48%
Writing papers	somewhat difficult	45%
Speaking in or in front of class	somewhat difficult	30%
Managing time	a little difficult	40%
Paying college expenses	very difficult	37%
Getting help with coursework	a little difficult	49%
Interacting with faculty	not at all difficult	42%
Making new friends	not at all difficult	53%
Living on campus with roommate	not at all difficult	56%
Getting involved in campus activities	not at all difficult	53%
Being away from home	not at all difficult	38%

Most incoming freshmen (81.3%) expect to graduate within 4 to 4.5 years. 96.8% expect to graduate in 5.5 years or fewer. However, the graduation rate according to the National Center for Educational Statistics' most recent available data is 59 (57 at public institutions) percent (cohort beginning college Fall 2006). The graduation rate itself is defined as the number of students who complete their degree within six years, not four.

Respondents predicted that most of their grades would be A's (44%) or B's (52%) in their first year at Murray State. Using the mean high school GPA as a benchmark (3.44) for unrealistic expectations in achieving mostly A's and B's, 19.1% of students who finished high school with a 3.0 expected to make mostly B's or higher at MSU.