From Data to Information to Campus-wide Dialogue

Getting to Know New Students at The Evergreen State College



Institutional Research and Assessment at The Evergreen State College gathers information from surveys, administrative data, focus groups, and other forms of research to support efforts to improve the college experience for students.

This poster shows some of the methods that Institutional Research uses to understand the population of new students and how it shares this information campus-wide.

Sources of Data

National Survey of Student Engagement Nationally-normed survey assessing student engagement

Evergreen New Student Survey

Survey of new first-time, first-year students and new transfer students

Evergreen Student Experience Survey Survey of a sample of undergraduates and an over-sampling of all respondents to the

Evergreen New Student Survey

Enrollment and Retention Data

Data available in BANNER administrative data system.

Further Analysis

- Benchmark report that disaggregates results for individual items
- Comparisons to peers/consortiums
- Trend lines for benchmarks
- Comparisons with results of Faculty Survey of Student Engagement
- Report on New Student Survey results
- Analysis of subgroups based on demographics
- Analysis of trend lines in data
- Decisions about changes in survey where appropriate.
- Report on survey results
- Analysis of subgroups based on demographics or other attributes
- Analysis of trend lines in data
- Longitudinal comparisons to Evergreen New Student Survey
- Decisions about changes in survey where appropriate.
- Annual summary reports and charts
- Maps using Geographic Information System (GIS)

Engage various campus groups in discussion of information

Facilitate Community Forums to discuss data with students, faculty, and staff in broad, shared discussions.

Support Disappearing Task Forces (DTFs), such as the First-year Experience DTF, that are charged to investigate particular issues.

Present at Faculty Development and Planning Institutes to support program decision-making and classroom assessment.

Present to groups of staff such as student affairs professionals and to standing boards and committees such as the Board of Trustees and the Enrollment Coordinating Committee to assist in decision-making, improvement, indicators/metrics.

Publish reports, charts, and maps on the college website and articles in the campus paper for general dissemination of information and to support research and decision-making.

What's unique about Evergreen's new students? (And what's so unique about Evergreen?)

- New students enter a college where there are no majors, no academic departments, and no grades.
- Most students participate in full-time, interdisciplinary programs that are theme-based rather than taking multiple classes in a given quarter. Programs can be one to three quarters long.
- Students are expected to participate in seminars and group projects that are collaborative in nature and to be independent, self-directed learners.
- Evergreen's unique pedagogy and structure can be a significant change for students coming from high school or for transfer students who are used to a more traditional college structure.
- Evergreen's cohort of new first-time, first-year students is a smaller percentage of the incoming class than among other public, liberal arts colleges.



Prospective students at Evergreen Preview Day.

Demographics of New First-time, First-year Students Fall 2005

605 Degree-seeking first-time, first-year students 50% Female/50% Male

39.5% From out-of-state

86% High school direct

14% More than one year since High School or GED

17% Students of color

22% First generation

Demographics of New Transfer Students Fall 2005

807 Degree-seeking transfer students

61% Female/39% Male

17% From out-of-state

71% Transferred from a 2-year college

25% Transferred from a 4-year college

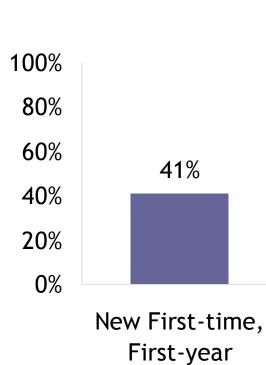
4% "Returning Greeners" with transfer credits

18% Students of color



Students at Freshmen Advising Day workshop.

Enrollment of "New Students" at The Evergreen State College Fall 2005



Students

New Transfer

Students

Returning Greeners (with no new transfer credit)

Example 1: Using the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to understand the First-year Experience

NSSE 2005: Selected Individual Items from Enriching Educational Experiences Benchmark	Evergreen	COPLAC	All Liberal Arts	All NSSE Institutions
Evergreen significantly <u>higher</u> than all three peer groups (p<.01) in first-year students who participated in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together.	31%	8%	10%	15%
Evergreen significantly <u>lower</u> than all three peer groups (p<.01) in first-year students who have done foreign language coursework.	13%	32%	44%	25%

Students doing field work in Introduction to Environmental Studies.

Questions these data raised:

- A much greater proportion (98.5%) of first-year students participate in at least one interdisciplinary, integrative program during their first year at Evergreen than the 31% who reported participation in a learning community in the NSSE survey. Programs are structured as learning communities. Do students not recognize them as learning communities? What do students consider to be a learning community?
- Evergreen does not have general distribution requirements. How will the opening of a new Community Language Lab in 2006 affect the study of foreign language? What other ways can the college support additional foreign language opportunities?



The Evergreen State College was in the top 10th percentile for the Academic Challenge benchmark in the 2005 NSSE survey. "Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote high levels of student achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance." - NSSE Institutional Benchmark Report

Compared to first-time, first-year students at participating NSSE institutions, Evergreen first-year students reported:

- A More time spent preparing for class;
- A More coursework emphasizing synthesis, analysis, and making judgments about the value of information;
- Reading more assigned texts;
- * Writing more papers under 5 pages and those of 20 pages or more.

Example 2: Using the Evergreen New Student Survey and Evergreen Student Experience Survey to Analyze Skills, Goals, and Confidence

Skills

How would you rate your level of skill in the following? Evergreen New Student Survey 2005—First-time, First-Year Respondents — Items with Lowest Means	Mean	No Skill (0)	Low (1)	Moderate (2)	High (3)	Very High (4)
Giving effective presentations	2.48	0.5%	11.4%	39.9%	36.0%	12.2%
Readiness for a career	2.08	2.9%	24.3%	42.0%	22.9%	7.9%
Understanding and applying scientific principles and methods	2.08	2.0%	24.9%	42.8%	23.5%	6.8%
Managing your time effectively	2.00	5.6%	25.1%	41.2%	19.5%	8.5%
Understanding and applying quantitative principles and methods (e.g. mathematics, statistics)	1.78	6.1%	34.8%	38.7%	15.8%	4.6%



How important are the following goals for you in earning your college degree? Evergreen New Student Survey 2005—First-time, First-Year Respondents —Selected Items	Mean	Not Important (0)	Slightly Important (1)	Important (2)	Very Important (3)
Achieving personal success or satisfaction	2.83	0.0%	2.4%	12.1%	85.4%
Getting a job of your choice or making a career change	2.40	2.2%	10.5%	32.1%	55.2%
Developing artistic abilities using one or more media (e.g. sculpture, painting, film, video, photography)	2.09	6.6%	22.9%	25.5%	45.0%
Influencing or changing the political system	1.74	10.5%	30.9%	32.6%	26.0%
Having computer technology skills	1.54	14.2%	35.0%	33.3%	17.6%

Confidence							
How confident are you that you…? Evergreen New Student Survey 2005—First-time, First-Year Respondents — Selected Items	Mean	Not at All (0)	A Little (1)	Somewhat (2)	Quite (3)	Very (4)	
Will obtain a well-rounded interdisciplinary education	3.39	0.0%	0.7%	8.4%	42.3%	48.6%	
Have the skills and abilities to succeed at Evergreen	3.27	0.0%	1.2%	13.0%	43.3%	42.5%	
Will fit in at Evergreen socially	2.91	1.7%	7.3%	23.7%	32.3%	35.0%	
Will be able to manage any debt that you incur in completing your education	2.70	1.2%	11.3%	28.7%	33.8%	25.0%	
Have the funding to complete your studies at Evergreen	2.68	2.9%	11.7%	28.1%	29.1%	28.1%	



Student in Introduction to Environmental Studies.

The Evergreen Student Experience Survey is administered during Spring Quarter to all respondents to the New Student Survey plus a sample of the total undergraduate population.

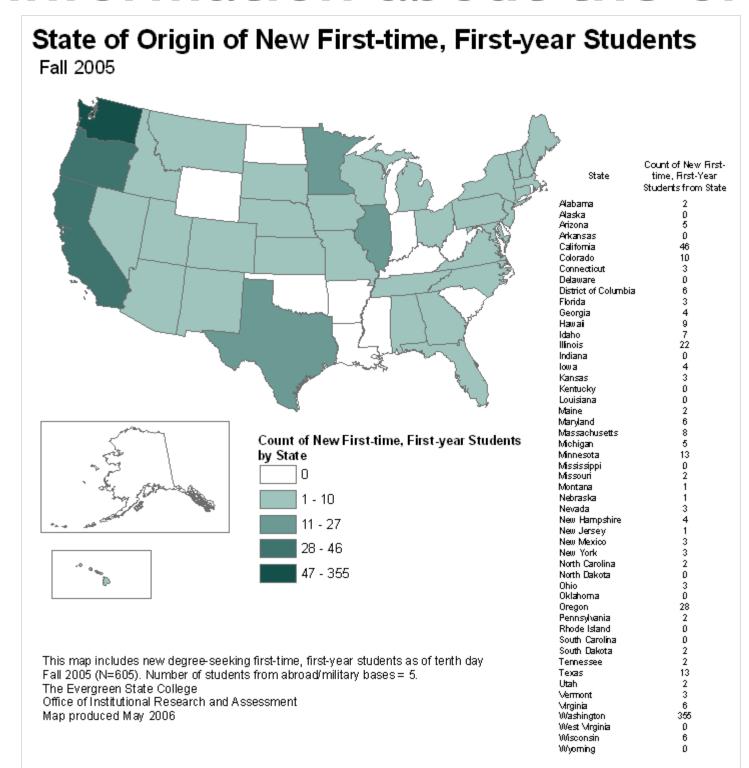
Data sets from the Evergreen New Student Survey and the Evergreen Student Experience Survey can be used in building retention models.

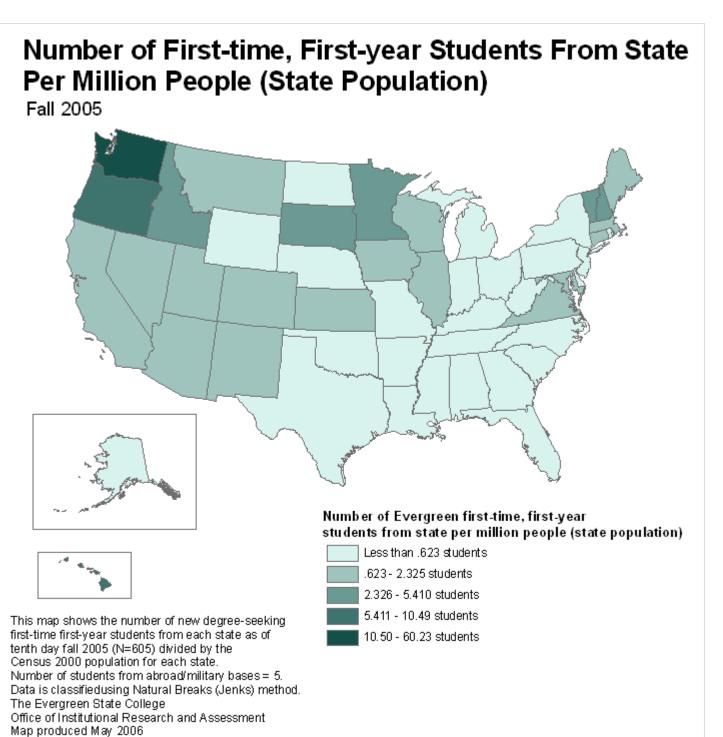
Self-reported skill upon entry can be compared to Evergreen's contribution to growth in the same skill areas using the Evergreen Student Experience Survey.

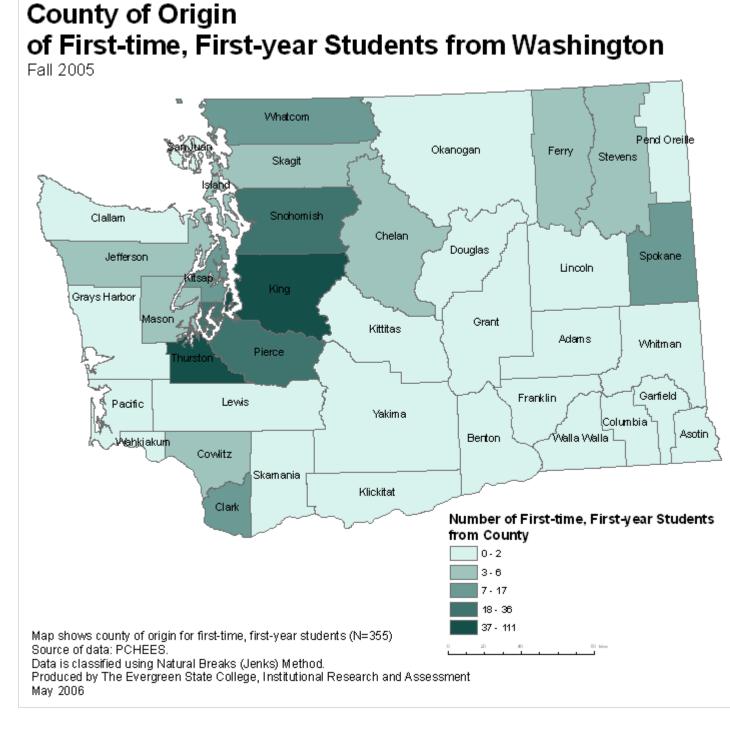
Goals upon entry give the college a sense of what students envision from their college education. These can be compared to the same items on the Evergreen Student Experience Survey.

Confidence upon entry can the show areas where students are more or less confident in factors that are related to retention. Confidence items can be compared to the same items on the Evergreen Student Experience Survey.

Example 3: Using a Geographic Information System (GIS) to display and analyze geographic information about the origin of new students



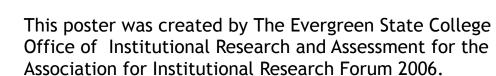




Number of First-time, First-year Students from County Per 1,000 People Age 18-21 Number of First-time, First-year Students From County Per 1,000 People Age 18-21 Less than .2810 .2810 - 0.8005 0.8006 - 1.456 Map shows county of origin for first-time, first-year students (N=355) 1.457 - 2.695 divided by the county population of people age 18-21. 2.696 - 8.310 County population figures are from the 2000 US Census. Data was classified using Natural Breaks (Jenks) method 0 20 40 Source of data: PCHEES Produced by The Evergreen State College Office of Institutional Research and Assessment March 2006

More information at

www.evergreen.edu/institutionalresearch





Institutional Research and Assessment produces maps to support institutional planning efforts. Originally, the office provided only headcount maps. However, normalized maps were added that present numbers relative to the population of each geographic unit, such as the total population of each state or the population of college age students in each county.