The 2022 Northwestern Survey of New Students was administered to all incoming first-year undergraduate students. The invitation email was sent on August 30th, 2022. Three reminder emails were sent before the survey closed on September 11th, 2022, the day before the start of Wildcat Welcome.

The survey received 1,050 responses for an overall response rate of 51%. Female students had a higher response rate (54%) than Males (47%). The response rate by race/ethnicity categories was highest for White students (57%) and lowest for Black/African American students (42%). First Generation students had a lower response rate (45%) than Continuing Generation students (52%).

The table below shows the sex and race/ethnicity composition of survey respondents and of the entire entering class. Comparing the percentages shows that the survey results are generally representative of the entire class. Females, specifically White Females, are slightly overrepresented in the survey results while Males, specifically Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African American, and Hispanic, are slightly underrepresented in the survey results.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Entering Class</th>
<th>Survey Respondents</th>
<th>Entering Class</th>
<th>Survey Respondents</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Native American</td>
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<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
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<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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<td>9%</td>
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<td>Two or More Races</td>
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<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>58%</td>
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This year’s survey instrument asked students about their academic interests, expectations for college, high school activities, background, academic preparation, college search process, finances, and post-graduation plans. Below is a summary of overall results for selected questions with sub-group results identified where notable.

The complete survey results from this year and past years are available to be viewed here.

Expectations for College

The survey started by asking incoming students to rate the importance of Northwestern providing various experiences to them. Overall, the most important experience was “Opportunities to discover and pursue your intellectual passion,” which was considered essential by 80% of respondents. Most respondents also rated three other experiences as essential: “Opportunities to develop skills valuable in
the workforce” (68%), “Skills for lifelong learning,” (59%), and “Deep expertise in a specific discipline or area of study” (57%). Additionally, “A global perspective” was rated as essential by most Black/African American respondents (54%) and International (56%) respondents.

Students were asked to rate their interest level in participating in various activities. Two activities stood out as having the most interest to them: “Joining a student club or organization” (86% very interested) and “Having an internship” (81%). Two other activities were also rated as very interested by most respondents: “Working with a professor on a research project” (52%) and “Studying abroad” (51%). Several other activities with higher levels of interest amongst subgroups were: “Having a leadership role in student government, a club, organization, or team” was rated very interested by 56% of International students while “Getting a job to help pay for college expenses” was rated very interested by 53% of Black/African American students.

Overall, 17% of students indicated they are very confident in their choice of major. The highest percentage by school is 35% for Communication students, followed by Medill Journalism (26%) and Bienen Music (25%). The schools with the lowest percentage of students very confident in their major were Education & Social Policy (12%) and McCormick Engineering (12%). Overall, 6% of responding students rated their confidence in their choice of major as not confident at all. These percentages were similar across schools except for Communication, which only had 1% of students respond as such.

**Preparedness for College**

Less than 20% of incoming students indicated they felt very well prepared to “Succeed academically” (14%) or “Get along socially” (19%) at Northwestern. About half of respondents rated themselves as quite well prepared for each item (50% to “Succeed academically” and 47% to “Get along socially”). Male students rated their level of preparedness slightly higher than female students with 18% very well prepared to “Succeed academically,” compared to 11% for females and 21% very well prepared to “Get along socially,” compared to 18% of females. Across race/ethnicity, Black/African American students responded with the highest percentage very well prepared to “Succeed academically,” (19%) and white students had the highest percentage very well prepared to “Get along socially” (24%).

**Choosing a College**

Overall, 69% of respondents rated Northwestern as their First choice among colleges they applied to. Only 7% rated Northwestern as Less than third choice. White students had the highest percentage (75%) First choice by race/ethnic group with Hispanic having the lowest percentage (58%) selecting First choice. By school, Bienen Music students had the highest percentage (78%) rating Northwestern First choice (78%) while SESP had the lowest percentage (60%).

**Paying for College**

Overall, most respondents have minimal concerns about their family’s ability to pay for their college education with 42% rating their level of concern as A little and 37% as Not at all. There were 7% who indicated A great deal of concern. Of Hispanic students, 10% of reported A great deal of concern, the only sub-group with at least 10% reporting that level of concern.
After College

A majority (58%) of incoming students indicated they “intend to pursue a graduate or professional degree” in the future. Only 5% said No and the rest reported Not sure yet. Female students said Yes at a higher rate (61%) than male students (53%). Asian/Pacific Islander and Black/African American students had the highest Yes percentages (65%) by race/ethnicity. White and International students had the lowest Yes percentages (51%). First Generation students reported Yes at a higher rate (62%) than Continuing Generation students (57%).

High School

A majority (53%) of incoming students attended a traditional public high school; this rate form domestic students was highest amongst Asian/Pacific Islander (63%) and lowest for Hispanic (47%) students. For International students 44% attended a Private – independent non-residential high school.

Looking at students’ feelings during their last year of high school, most students were able to “Find a balance between schoolwork and other aspects of their lives” with 17% responding Very often and 45% responding Often to that question. Despite these results, nearly half of students “felt overwhelmed by all they had to do” with 16% responding Very often and another 31% responding Often to that question. The percentages were much higher for females (23% Very often and 37% Often) than for males (6% Very often and 22% Often). There were many students reporting they “feel overwhelming anxiety” with 12% responding Very often and 19% responding Often. Again, the rates were higher for females (16% Very often and 22% Often) than for males (6% Very often and 15% Often).

Your Background

Based on responses to the question asking respondents their sexual orientation, more than a quarter of entering students do not identify as Straight. For that question, 10% of respondents selected Bisexual, 5% selected Queer, 5% selected Gay/lesbian, and 6% selected Unsure.

Responding to the question, “While at Northwestern, what are the chances you will do the following?” half of students reported Very good chance (18%) or Some chance (32%) of “Seeking psychological services and accommodations.” The percentages are noticeably higher for females (24% Very good chance and 34% Some chance) than for males (10% Very good chance and 28% Some chance).

Your Parents

Respondents are asked to provide their family’s pre-tax income using nine monetary ranges. Grouping some of those ranges into four income categories shows that nearly half (45%) of survey respondents indicated their pre-tax family income was $200k or greater. About a quarter (26%) said it was between $100k and $200k. There were smaller percentages for $50k to $100k (15%) and $50k or less (16%). For females, 20% were in the $50k or less category compared to 12% of males. For males, 29% were in the $100k-$200k category compared to 23% of females. A majority (55%) of white students were in the $200k or greater category. There were larger shares of students in the $50k or less category for several sub-groups: International (31%), Black/African American (28%), Hispanic (23%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (21%). Seventeen percent of Black/African American respondents indicated a family income of $200k or greater, while 31% were in the $100k-$200k category.
Northwestern-specific Questions

The biggest influences in student decisions to attend Northwestern were: “Northwestern has a very good academic reputation” (rated as Very important by 90% of respondents), “Northwestern graduates get good jobs” (77%), “National and global university rankings” (65%), and “A visit to campus” (51%). Looking at sub-groups, “Northwestern has a good reputation for its social activities” was rated as Very important by 51% of International students while “The cost of attending Northwestern” was Very important for 62% of Black/African American students. For First Generation students, 53% rated “Northwestern graduates gain admission to top graduate/professional schools” as Very important and 70% rated “The cost of attending Northwestern” as Very important.

As previously mentioned, please visit the interactive survey results here to explore the results in further detail.

If you have additional questions, please contact ir@northwestern.edu