

# PRE-ORIENTATION SURVEY PROCESS: THE THINGS WE LEARN FROM “TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF”

## WHAT IS THE PRE-ORIENTATION SURVEY “TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF?”

The Pre-Orientation Survey combines common questions on academics, previous experiences, involvement, expectations, and concerns with questions from the student’s specific college of enrollment. This process used to exist separately in some colleges but was centralized by Orientation & First-Year Programs in 2009. As of 2014, the survey results are recorded in a database newly managed by CLA OIT. In 2015, questions were mapped with the CIRP survey and several items were enhanced.

## WHAT IS THE METHODOLOGY?

Once a student confirms their enrollment at the University, they are required to complete their New Student Checklist. This checklist is personalized by college and includes the “Tell Us About Yourself” survey, Orientation date selection, placement testing, among other items. The items on the list vary by college and are completed by freshman and transfer students.

## RESPONSE RATE:

Because this is a requirement on the New Student Checklist, the response rate is at least 98% for all new students.

## WHAT IS INCLUDED?:

“Tell Us About Yourself” covers many topics including, why students chose the U, parent/guardian education, where students intend to live and why, as well as thoughts on major decisiveness, academic integrity, paying for college, safety, appreciating differences, involvement, as well as general anxieties and concerns.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

We’re glad you chose the University of Minnesota! Please tell us what factors were most important in making your choice.

Where do you intend to live during the next year? What are the primary reasons that you chose your living situation (on or off campus)?

How do you plan to finance your education?

From previous studies, we know that the following items are concerns or anxieties new students have during their first year. Please rank your level of concern for each of the following topics related to your transition to college: (Likert: Very Concerned, Concerned, Somewhat Concerned, Indifferent, Not Concerned At All)

- Making friends and meeting people
- Relationships with others (friends and family members)
- Academic coursework (during well in class, workload)
- Living situation (residence hall life, roommate problems)
- Deciding on a major/career path
- Staying healthy (nutritious eating, physical fitness, healthy lifestyle, adequate sleep)
- Mental health (stress management, emotional health, anxiety, and depression)
- Financial concerns (paying tuition, financial aid, managing money)
- Developing skills related to note-taking, studying, time management
- Registration for courses
- Homesickness
- Cultural adjustment
- Being safe on-campus (personal safety)
- Finding places to study
- Finding a job (while in school)
- Obtaining academic assistance (tutoring, study groups, writing support, etc.)
- Peer pressure related to social life
- Other (open)

## How confident are you in your ability to:

(Not Confident, Somewhat Confident, Confident, Very Confident)

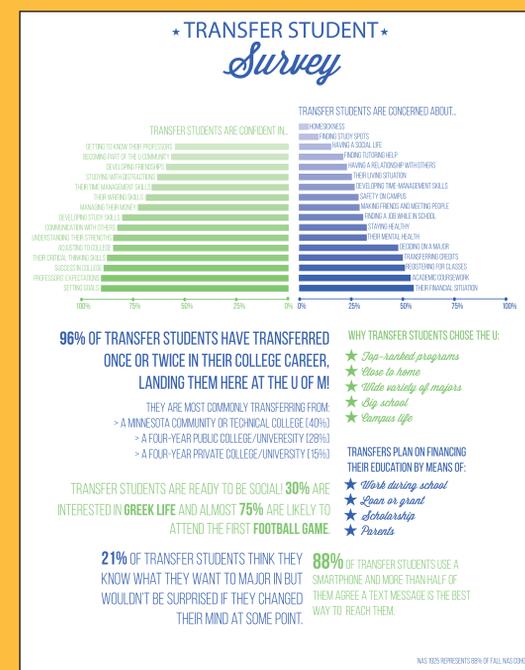
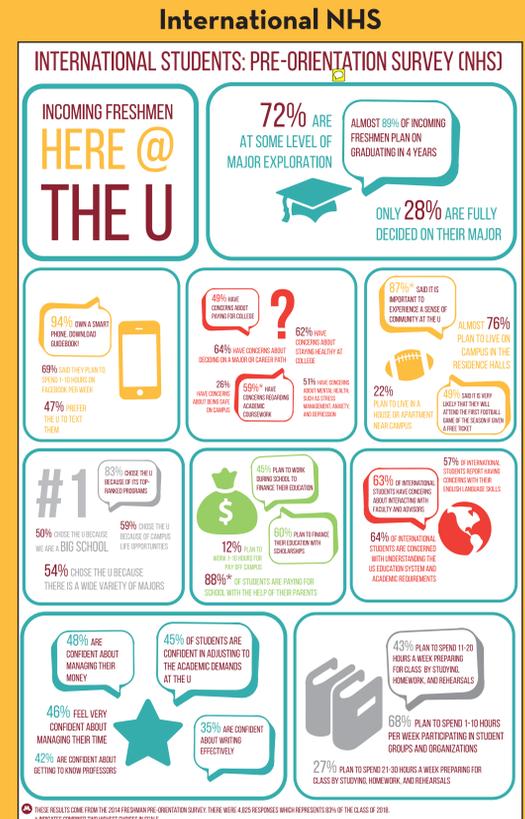
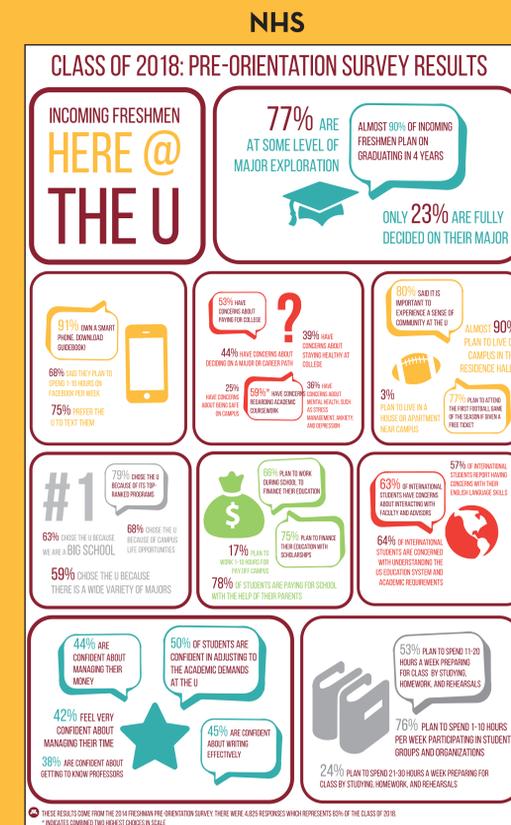
- Understand what professors expect from you academically
- Develop effective study skills
- Adjust to the academic demands of college
- Manage your time effectively
- Get to know your professors
- Develop close friendships with other students
- Feel like you’re part of the University community
- Be a successful college student
- Study when there are other distractions
- Write effectively
- Think critically in order to solve problems
- Communicate effectively with others
- Set goals in strive to achieve them
- Manage your money
- Understand your strengths

## HOW IS IT USED?

The responses are utilized in multiple ways:

1. Advisers in each college can review individual results in order to enhance and personalize the advising sessions.
2. OFYP pulls aggregate reports on various common questions to conduct a gap analysis between expectations and “reality” enhancing program messaging and content as needed.
3. A few results and/or gaps are integrated and addressed in Student Leader training, Orientation and Welcome Week content.
4. The results were a part of the first year retention analysis conducted by the Enrollment Management Executive Committee Data Group in 2014.
5. OFYP plans to further analyze responses by student subgroup to learn differences and better support the student transition acknowledging the unique experiences, characteristics and traits our students bring to the experience.
6. Colleges would like to further analyze the data both at the aggregate and by major level.

## THINGS WE LEARN



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