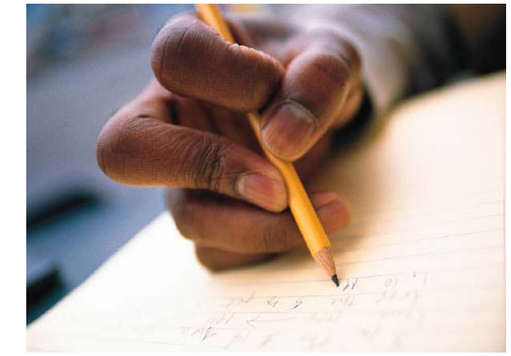

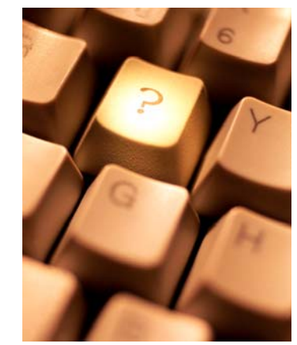

2006-07 Assessment Annual

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11/07

NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE
ST. PAUL - MINNESOTA

2006-07 ASSESSMENT ANNUAL

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2006 Freshmen Data

The ***Cooperative Institutional Research Project*** [CIRP] of the Higher Education Research Institution [HERI] at UCLA is one of the most significant national research studies of undergraduate education. This annual survey of entering college freshmen covers an array of demographic, experiential, and attitudinal issues. The questionnaire also covers degree aspirations, major and career plans and expectations about college.

As a part of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities [CCCU] cooperative assessment and retention initiatives, Northwestern College administers the CIRP to incoming freshmen every other year. Responses of NWC freshmen in 2006 are compared with NWC freshmen of previous years as well as freshmen enrolled in 81 colleges in the CCCU and a HERI sample of students in private colleges.

For most incoming freshmen, Northwestern was their first choice of colleges to attend. More than a third did not apply anywhere else.

Northwestern was the first choice of most incoming freshmen

Nearly 91 percent of incoming freshmen reported that Northwestern College was their first college choice. This number was substantially higher than the National Private college sample of 67.3 percent and somewhat higher than the CCCU sample of 82.6 percent (Chart 1). Over 31 percent of NWC freshmen did not apply at any other institution compared with 67.3 percent in the National Private college sample and 82.6 percent in the CCCU sample.

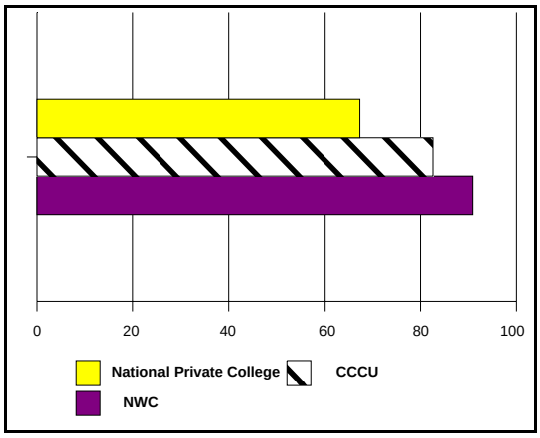

CHART 1. Northwestern College as first choice

Most freshmen are close to home

Ninety percent of 2006 freshmen reported that Northwestern College is within a day's drive from home (500 miles). Nearly half (49.9 percent) of their families live within 100 miles of the College.

The percentage of minority students entering NWC dropped from 2004 highs

The percentage of incoming NWC represents less racial diversity than those of the CCCU (10.6 percent) or students in National Private colleges (20.7 percent) (Chart 2).

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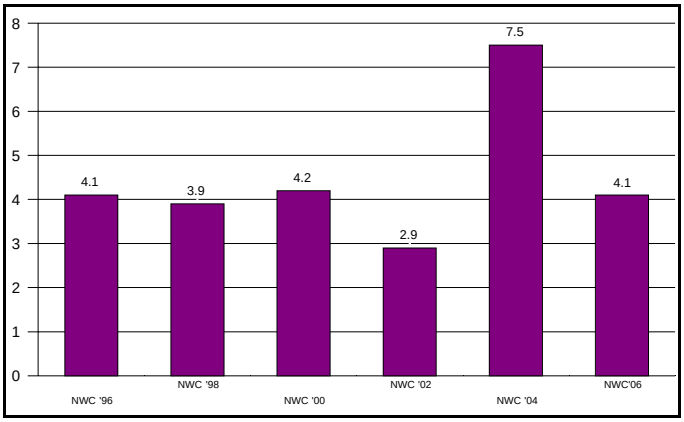

CHART 2. Racial background of incoming freshmen

Incoming NWC freshmen reported higher high school grades than the CCCU and National Private college samples.

High school grades

The percentage of freshmen reporting high school grades in the "A" range reached over 65 percent in 2006, higher than grades reported by freshmen in the CCCU (54.4 percent) and the National Private college samples (46.0 percent) (Chart 3).

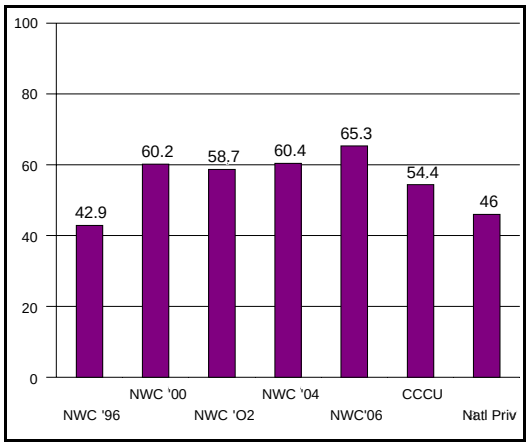

CHART 3. Percentages earning an "A" average in high school

Parents' education, income and marital status

Fathers of nearly 40 percent of incoming freshmen have completed a college degree and 16.2 percent have earned a graduate degree. These numbers are 44.7 percent and 8.0 percent for mothers of incoming freshmen. A slightly higher percent of parents of CCCU freshmen had also earned graduate degrees.

Freshmen estimates of family income rose to the highest level ever and are comparable with those of freshmen in the CCCU, and the National Private sample. Over 65 percent of NWC freshmen estimate family income of over $50,000,cocmpared to 67.3 for the CCCU and 71.4 for National Private samples.

Only 9.9 percent of Northwestern freshmen reported parents who are divorced or living apart compared with 18.9 in the CCCU sample and 25.2 in the National Private sample.

Freshmen self-rating of abilities by gender

The **CIRP** questionnaire asks freshmen to rate themselves on a number of abilities. Chart 4 shows the percentage of freshmen in 2006 who ranked themselves as *Above Average* as compared to other college freshmen. Freshmen rated themselves highest in **religiosity, cooperativeness**, **the ability to understand others, spirituality, academic ability** and the **drive to achieve**.

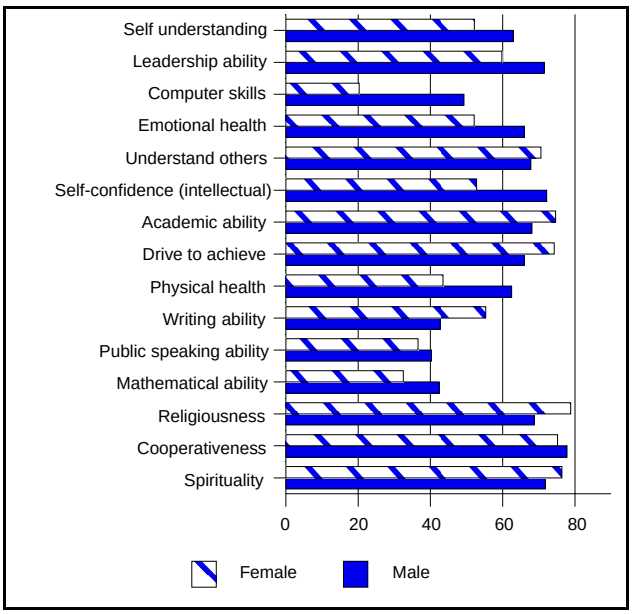

CHART 4. Perceived abilities of incoming freshmen

"Religious orientation" remains the top reason for selecting Northwestern.

Academic reputation increases as a reason for selecting NWC

The top reasons for selecting NWC have remained the same over the last several years, with **religious orientation** consistently the major reason. However, the percentage selecting **academic reputation**, **size of the college,** and **grads go to top grad schools** were the highest ever reported, while **financial assistance offered** dropped somewhat as a reason for selecting NWC in 2006. Nearly half the freshmen reported that a visit to the College played a role in their decision to attend Northwestern (Table 1).

Reason for Selecting NWC	2006	2004	2002	2000	1998
Religious orientation	**87.3**	87.0	84.9	86.8	80.8
Academic reputation	**59.2**	42.5	44.4	54.5	46.8
Size of the college	**55.3**	49.2	47.1	50.3	47.4
Visit to campus	**47.2**	49.6	NA	NA	NA
Financial assistance offered	**33.9**	37.2	35.6	31.7	37.3
Good social reputation	**34.3**	26.4	21.7	37.6	30.8
Live near home	**16.4**	16.6	14.5	13.9	14.5
Grads go to top grad schools	**17.1**	8.4	4.0	9.2	12.1

TABLE 1. Percent selecting reasons for choosing NWC

Over half of freshmen plan to complete graduate degrees in the future

Over fifty-four percent of the 2006 freshmen reported planning to complete graduate degrees in the future, with some differences between males (61.6 percent) and females (48.5 percent). Fewer Northwestern freshmen reported planning to complete graduate degrees than the CCCU sample (62.3 percent) and the 73.2 percent reported by the National Private college sample. For both of these sample groups more females than males reported their intention to complete a graduate degree in the future.

Nearly three-fourths of incoming freshmen expect to be satisfied with their experience at Northwestern.

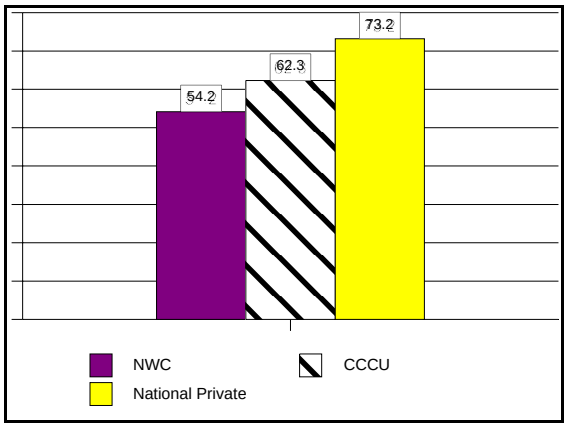

Chart 5. Percent of freshmen planning to attend graduate school

Freshmen report their expectations for their college life

More incoming Northwestern freshman plan to **be satisfied with their college**, **work to help pay expenses**, **earn at least a "B" average**, and **participate in volunteer and community service** than their counterparts in the other sample groups. Slightly more Northwester freshmen also reported a plan to transfer to another institution (Table 2).

Chances are good that he/she will:	NWC	CCCU	Natl. Private
Be satisfied with your college	**74.1**	66.0	55.9
Get a job to help pay expenses	**68.6**	54.8	44.0
Make at least a "B" average	**66.9**	63.1	61.9
Socialize with someone of another race/culture	**62.7**	67.0	65.2
Participate in volunteer or community service	**48.2**	42.0	31.2
Participate in study abroad	**23.5**	27.6	33.1
Participate in athletics	**23.1**	20.4	24.7
Change major field	**12.5**	13.0	12.9
Transfer before graduating	**7.1**	5.5	6.3

TABLE 2. Events likely to occur during College

Raising a Family heads list of life objectives considered essential by freshmen

The most essential objective for NWC freshmen were **raising a family, helping others in difficulty, influencing social values** and **developing a philosophy of life**. These objectives have remained the most essential for Northwestern freshmen since the survey was first given in 1994.

There are significant differences between Northwestern, CCCU institutions and other National Private colleges on several items, most notably the importance of being **well-off financially,** and **obtaining recognition from colleagues.** (Table 3).

Essential Life Objectives	NWC	CCCU	Natl. Private
Raise a family	**88.6**	84.3	75.8
Help others in difficulty	**76.5**	77.2	68.6
Influence social values	**56.2**	53.6	45.1
Develop a philosophy of life	**54.1**	48.5	47.3
Improve my understanding of other cultures	**46.1**	50.2	50.7
Become authority in my field	**41.6**	46.9	56.7
Become a community leader	**40.2**	35.6	35.7
Be well off financially	**34.6**	45.0	68.4
Keeping up-to-date with politics	**31.7**	30.1	36.9
Obtain recognition for colleagues	**26.2**	33.7	51.9
Participating in community action	**25.8**	27.2	28.9
Becoming accomplished in the performing arts	**23.9**	18.2	18.0
Help to promote racial understanding	**22.5**	27.7	34.6
Creating artistic work	**17.9**	15.0	18.2
Influencing the political structure	**14.8**	16.5	22.8
Becoming involved in cleaning up the environment	**10.3**	12.5	22.5

TABLE 3. Life objectives viewed as *essential*

Being well-off financially less important to Northwestern freshmen than other sample groups.

Freshmen concerns about finances higher than other sample groups

Approximately 20 percent of Northwestern freshman report that financing their college education is a major concern. This percentage has remained relatively constant over the past several years. Northwestern freshmen report more concern with finances than freshmen in the CCCU or National Private college sample.

	2006	2004	2002	2000	1998	CCCU 2006	Natl Private 2006
No concern	18.6	18.5	21.8	22.4	18.5	27.4	35.8
Some concern	61.1	59.8	59.8	56.8	55.6	57.0	52.5
Major concern	20.4	21.7	18.4	20.7	36.3	15.6	11.6

TABLE 4. Level of concern about financing College

Educational Outcomes

Written Communication

Objective: Northwestern College seniors will demonstrate written communication skills sufficient to express ideas clearly and to communicate them effectively.

Graduating seniors reported NWC influenced their writing ability

Seniors who graduated in 2007 were asked to complete the ***Northwestern College Senior Survey***. As part of this survey, graduates were asked to indicate the extent of Northwestern College's contribution to the achievement of a number of educational outcomes on a scale of *Very Much* to *None.*

Over 75 percent of seniors graduating in 2007 reported that Northwestern had *Very Much* or *Much* influence on their attainment of the outcome to **express ideas clearly in writing**. These results are compared to those obtained from NWC graduates in 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2005 in Chart 6.

The percentage of graduates who reported NWC had influenced their writing skills "Much" or "Very Much" reached the highest ever reported.

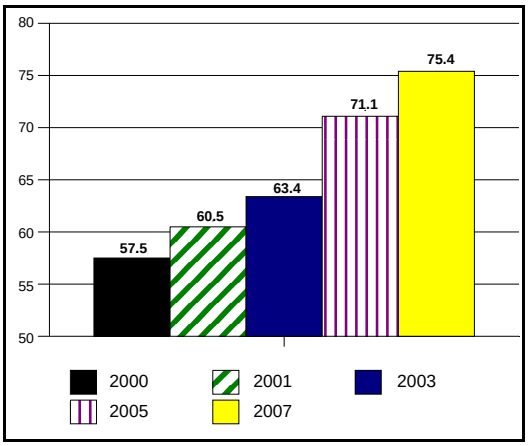

CHART 6. Self-rated *Above Average* in writing ability

Writing skills of students in WCE courses fell short of benchmarks

NWC professors judged upper-level writing skills to be the strongest in mechanics.

NWC instructors teaching upper-level courses designated as having a Written Communication Emphasis [WCE] judged the writing samples of students in four areas. Each area included several items developed to evaluate college-level writing. Table 5 shows the percentage of papers judged to be either *Strong*, *Adequate*, or *Weak* in the four focus areas. The goal of 60 percent *Strong* ratings was not reached for any of the areas, though only slightly for three. Table 6 shows the rating for each of the criteria items evaluated.

Criteria	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Content	57.9	34.7	7.4
Style	55.6	37.7	6.7
Mechanics	59.0	35.8	5.2
Documentation	39.2	35.5	25.3

TABLE 5. Percent of upper-class papers in each of the WCE writing skills criteria

Content	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Clear thesis or controlling idea(s)	58.8	32.7	8.5
Major ideas or components of composition clear and related to thesis or controlling idea(s)	53.8	37.1	9.1
Specific, accurate evidence or relevant, effective details	56.6	32.8	10.6
Coherent sequence and transitions between points	50.4	42.8	6.8
Correct type (genre) for the assignment	70.2	27.8	2.0
Style			
Appropriate word choice for the audience	55.1	37.2	7.6
Appropriate variety of sentence complexity for assignment/Audience	57.2	38.4	4.4
Appropriate variety of sentence complexity for the audience and assignment	58.2	37.4	4.4
Appropriate degree of clarity for assignment and audience	52.1	37.6	10.3
Mechanics			
Correct spelling	72.0	25.4	2.6
Proper use of commonly confused words	67.7	28.2	4.1
Suitable punctuation	46.9	47.2	5.8
Grammatically acceptable usage	49.6	42.2	8.2
Documentation	**Strong**	**Adequate**	**Weak**
Appropriate use of sources	41.2	35.5	23.3
Correct documentation style	37.1	35.5	27.4

TABLE 6. WCE rating by criteria items

The vast majority of students passed the NWC Editing Competency Exam on the first attempt

All students completing *ENG1105 Composition I* and *ENG1825 Honors Composition I* are required to take the NWC Editing Competency Exam as a prerequisite for *ENG2205 Composition II*. All incoming transfer students are also required to take this exam.

The goal of 80 percent passing the examination on the first attempt was reached for both semesters. All students completing *Honors Composition I* (ENG1825) passed the exam on the first attempt in 2006-2007 (Table 7).

Over 86 percent of transfer students taking the ECE through the ALPHA Center passed the exam on the first attempt.

Course	2006-2007		2005-2006		2004-2005		2003-2004		2002-2003		2001-2002	
	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S
ENG1105	83.9	89.0	87.0	75.5	85.9	83.1	85.5	84.4	90.3	88.0	82.5	82.2
ENG1825	100	100	93.8	100	100	100	100	93.8	100	100	100	100

TABLE 7. Percent passing the NWC Editing Competency Exam

Oral Communication

Objective: Northwestern College students will demonstrate oral communication skills sufficient to express ideas clearly and to communicate them effectively.

Graduates report Northwestern had a positive impact on their speaking ability

For the fifth year, results of the PRCA show speech anxiety is reduced for students comple ting SPE1075.

The ***Northwestern College Senior Survey*** measures the extent of the College's influence on the attaining of educational outcomes. The percentage that indicated the College had *Very Much* or *Much* influence on **speaking clearly and effectively** has increased each of the last three administrations of the survey. Results met the benchmark of 60 percent.

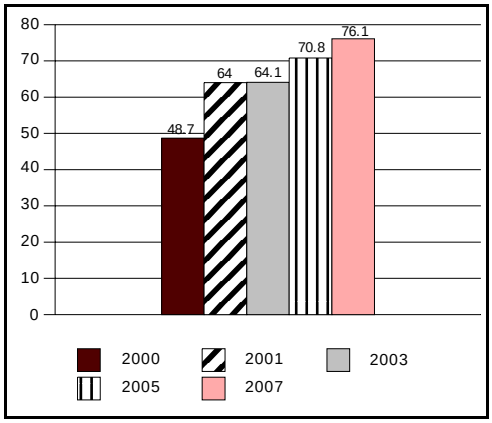

CHART 7. College influence on speaking ability

Speech anxiety decreased significantly for students completing required speech course

There was a statistically significant (p> .001) decrease in reported speech anxiety for students completing *SPE1075 Foundations of Communication* as measured by the ***McCroskey Personal Report of Communication Apprehension*** (PRCA) survey. The PRCA was administered as a pre-test at the beginning of *SPE1075* and again at the end of the course. Scores on the table below measure levels of anxiety. The lower the score, the less reported anxiety (Table 8).

	Pre	Post
Group discussions	2.48	2.26
Meetings	2.71	2.33
Conversation	2.39	2.36
Public speaking	3.25	2.73
Total	2.71	2.42

TABLE 8. Mean scores: PRCA speech anxiety scale

Professors evaluate upper-level oral communication skills

NWC instructors teaching courses designated as having an Oral Communication Emphasis [OCE] judged the oral skills of students based on four criteria. Each criteria included several items developed to evaluate the ability to communicate effectively. Table 13 shows the percentage of oral presentations judged to be either *Strong, Average* or *Weak* on the four criteria. A goal of 60 percent *Strong* was set for each criteria. This goal was reached for **Thesis/Purpose, Organization** and **Support Material**, however evaluations revealed **Delivery** to be an area needing further attention.

Criteria	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Thesis/Purpose	75.9	21.4	2.7
Organization	60.0	34.9	5.1
Support Material	65.5	30.3	4.1
Delivery	54.3	37.9	7.8

TABLE 9. Percent of presentations in each of the OCE criteria

Below are the specific items for each of the criteria categories.

Thesis/Purpose	Strong	Average	Weak
Message is appropriate to the audience	82.3	16.7	1.0
Purpose/thesis is clearly presented	69.8	25.8	4.5
Organization			
Ideas are clear, logical and effectively arranged	58.7	35.8	5.5
Includes relevant introduction and conclusion	61.5	33.7	4.9
Support Material			
Specific, credible, relevant sources used as appropriate	65.5	30.3	4.1
Delivery			
Manner is confident	55.4	38.4	6.1
Body language is appropriate (i.e., gestures, movements)	49.3	41.8	8.9
Makes eye contact	56.7	35.5	9.2
Use of voice is effective (voice inflections such as tone, cadence, rate, etc. are appropriate)	54.3	37.9	7.9

TABLE 10. OCE rating by criteria items

Professors rated speaking highest on "message appropriate for audience," lowest on "body language."

Other general education outcomes

Overall gains were reported for Northwestern's impact on graduates attaining most educational outcomes.

The extent of the College's influence on the attainment of a variety of educational outcomes was measured on the ***Northwestern College Senior Survey***. For nearly all of the items, the percentage of graduates reporting Northwestern's influence to be *Much* or *Very Much* increased over previous years.(Chart 8).

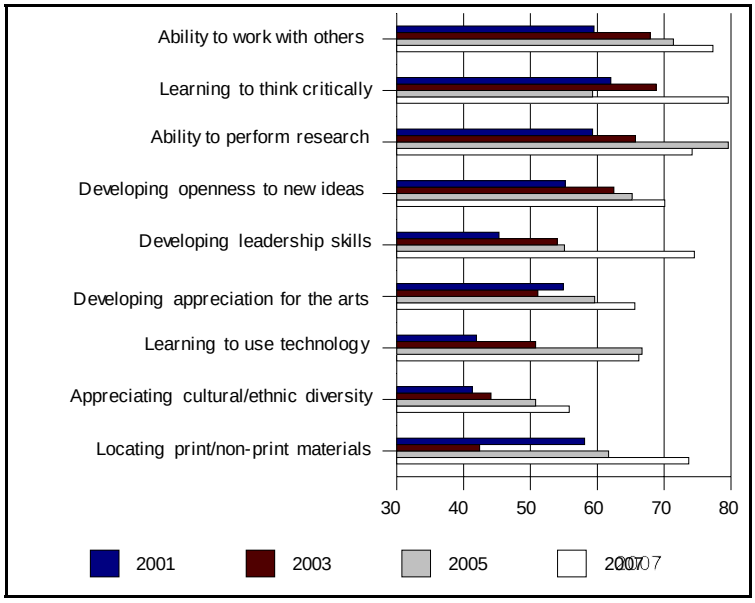

CHART 8. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* abilities and skills

GRE scores of NWC alumni

The ***Graduate Record Examinations*** (GRE) compares NWC alumni completing the exam with graduates from institutions of all types throughout the country. Mean scores achieved by Northwestern graduates have met or exceeded the benchmark of the 50th percentile since 2000 (Chart 9).

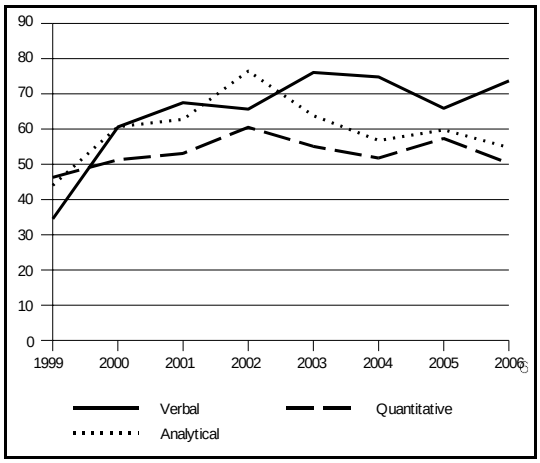

CHART 9. Mean scores for GRE exams

Alumni rate General Education outcomes

On the ***Northwestern College Alumni Survey***, alumni rated the extent of the College's influence on their attaining each learning outcome. Items were rating on a scale of *Very Much* (5) to *None* (1). Table 11 also shows the percentage indicating the College's influence as *Very Much* or *Much*.

	Alumns Mean	% Much & Very Much
Interpersonal skills	3.93	76.7
A life-long commitment to l learning	3.78	71.7
Writing skills	3.68	58.3
Leadership skills	3.70	65.0
Commitment to service	3.73	70.0
Critical thinking and reasoning	3.50	55.0
Ability to use the library and other information sources	3.63	57.7
Speaking skills	3.70	58.3
Problem-solving skills	3.45	45.0
Appreciation for the arts	3.42	48.4
Openness to new ideas	3.46	55.0
Knowledge and understanding of western civilization	3.31	40.7
Knowledge and understanding of other races and cultures	3.05	38.4
Competency in the use technology	3.07	30.0
Understanding of economic, social and political issues	2.98	28.3
Knowledge and understanding of scientific methods	2.91	28.3

TABLE 11. Alumni rating of general education outcomes

Satisfaction with Campus Life

Seniors report Satisfaction with "sense of community" on campus.

Overall graduate satisfaction with the NWC experience remains high

Over 85 percent of graduating seniors have consistently reported satisfaction with the **overall college experience** at Northwestern. This percentage has differed only slightly since 2000 as shown on Chart 10.

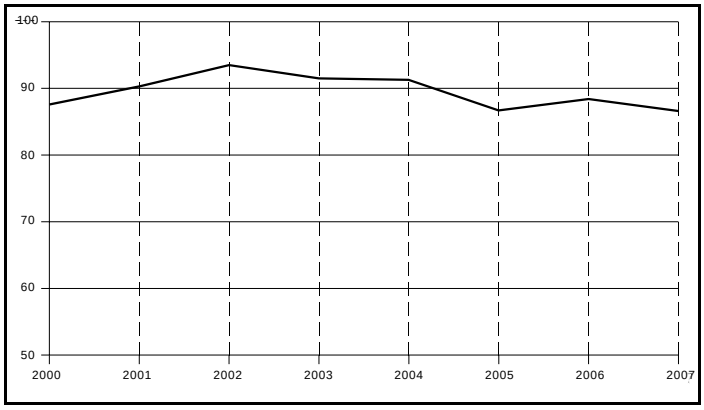

CHART 10. Satisfaction with overall College experience

While satisfaction with leadership and service opportunities remains high, declines reported

As reported on the ***Northwestern College Senior Survey***, satisfaction with areas of campus life decreased in 2007. Satisfaction with **student housing**, **leadership and service/volunteer opportunities** were lower than in previous administrations. (See Table 12.)

Campus Life	2007	2005	2003	2001	2000
Student housing	71.0	78.6	88.4	85.3	84.5
Service/volunteer opportunities	72.2	79.3	78.2	76.4	79.0
Sense of community on campus	74.9	75.1	81.6	73.0	67.5
Leadership opportunities	69.9	77.7	74.4	72.9	76.4
Rules governing student conduct	53.2	61.0	57.5	NA	51.5

TABLE 12. Percent who were *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with campus life

The majority of graduates expressed satisfaction with campus services

On the ***Northwestern College Senior Survey*** graduates were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction concerning a number of services offered on campus. The chart below shows the percentage of students who responded that they were *Very Satisfied* or *Satisfied* with the service on campus (Chart 11).

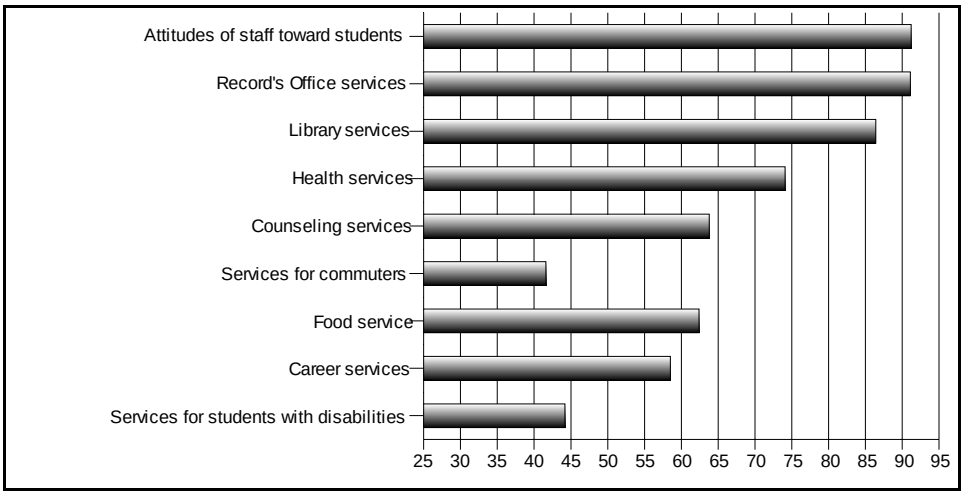

CHART 11. Percent satisfied with campus services

Graduates reported high satisfaction with the attitudes of staff toward students.

Table 13 shows a comparison of the responses of students in 2007 with students completing this survey in previous years.

	2007	2005	2003	2001	2000
Attitudes of staff towards students	91.2	90.9	88.9	88.4	92.1
Records Office services	91.1	90.3	80.8	88.0	88.1
Library services	86.4	83.4	84.5	84.2	79.3
Campus health services	74.1	75.8	77.3	79.6	77.2
Counseling services	63.7	63.0	69.8	81.2	73.5
Food service	62.5	53.3	69.2	NA	NA
Career services	58.5	48.4	64.9	NA	NA
Services for students with disabilities	44.2	38.9	41.8	52.5	57.5
Services for commuting students	41.6	54.1	58.9	65.1	59.2

TABLE 13. Satisfaction with campus services compared with previous years

Majority of alumni would choose Northwestern again

When asked on the ***Northwestern College Alumni Survey*** "If you could make your college choice over again would you choose to enroll at Northwestern College?" nearly 50 percent responded *Definitely Yes.*

Over 90 percent of alumni reported they were "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with their overall experience at Northwestern College.

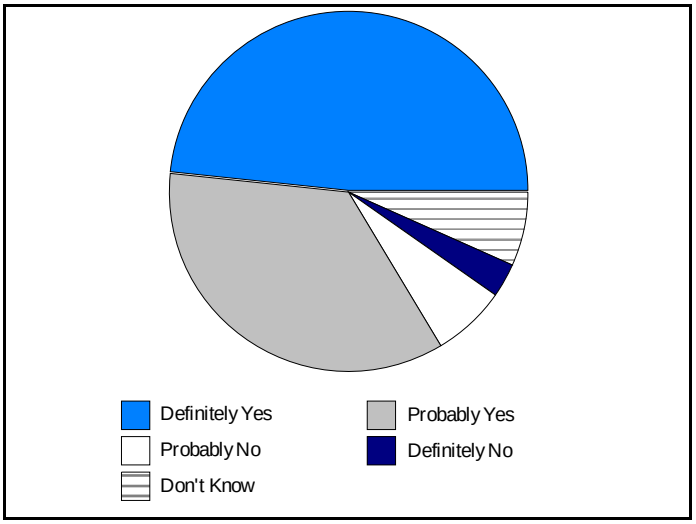

Chart 12. Percent of alumni who would enroll again at NWC

Spiritual and Ethical Outcomes

Seniors report Northwestern has greatest impact on biblical knowledge and spiritual formation

When asked the extent of the College's influence on the attainment of educational outcomes, those related to the spiritual distinctives of Northwestern College have consistently been rated highest among graduating seniors. The ***Northwestern College Senior Survey*** results indicate that Northwestern made a strong contribution to students' **knowledge of the Bible and doctrine**, **development of a Christian worldview, relating their faith to their major**, and **developing maturing personal faith in Jesus Christ**. Since the survey was first administered, seniors have rated faith-related outcomes in the top five of the 31 educational outcomes measured each year (Table 14).

NWC graduating seniors rated spiritual/ethical outcomes in the top five of the 31 educational outcomes measured each year.

	2007	2005	2003	2001	2000
Knowledge of the Bible and doctrines	1	8	1	1	2
Developing a Christian worldview	2	1	2	2	3
Relating my faith to my major	3	4	3	3	1
Developing a maturing faith in Christ	4	2	4	4	5

TABLE 14. Rank of top educational outcomes

Satisfaction with campus spiritual life

Nearly two-thirds of seniors indicated they were *Very Satisfied* or *Satisfied* with these areas of campus life However, since 2003, satisfaction with **chapel experiences**, **spiritual life experiences on campus** and the **College's spiritual climate has** declined somewhat. Satisfaction with **College-sponsored missions experiences**, showed an increase over 2005 (Chart 13).

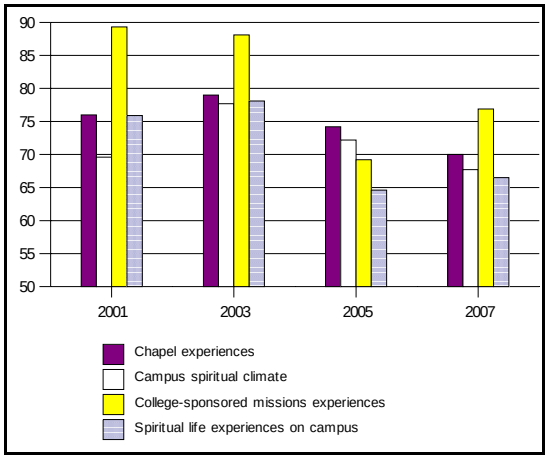

CHART 13: Satisfaction with spiritual life on campus

Graduates committed to supporting local churches

Survey results indicated that graduating seniors have a commitment to a local church, both through regular attendance and financial support (Chart 15).

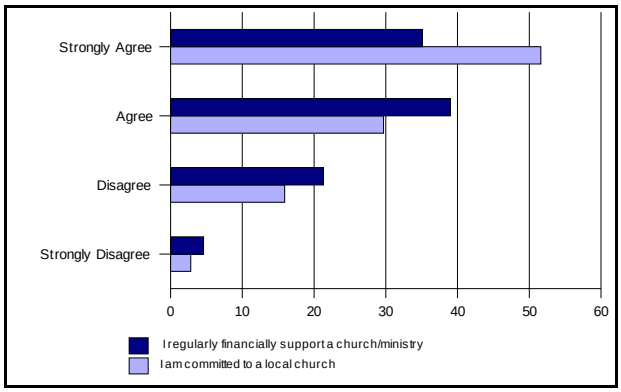

CHART 15. Support for a local church

Seniors' response to: How often do you attend a local church?

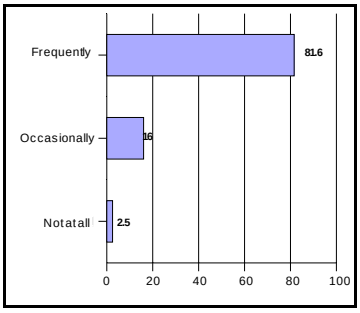

CHART 14. Attendance at local churches

Graduates report accountability played a role in their spiritual life

Nearly seventy percent of seniors reported they participated, at least occasionally, in an accountability relationship with another student. Over a third reported they were involved in this type of relationship with a faculty or staff member. These responses were lower than in 2005, but increased over previous years (Table 15).

Met in accountability relationship	2007	2005	2003	2001
With student	69.0	75.1	59.8	61.9
With faculty or staff	36.3	46.2	32.9	35.3

TABLE 15. Percent participated in an accountability relationship

Spiritual fit and growth

Over 80 percent of seniors *Strongly Agreed* or *Agreed* that their relationship with God grew during the time they were a student at NWC. Nearly 90 percent were in agreement that Northwestern was a good spiritual fit for them (Table 16).

	2007	2005	2003	2001
NWC was a good spiritual fit for me	88.9	94.3	90.0	80.4
My relationship with God grew while at NWC	83.6	89.4	93.6	85.8

TABLE 16. Satisfaction with spiritual life on campus

Seniors report engagement in spiritual disciplines

Over 80 percent of graduating seniors reported they engage in the spiritual disciplines of daily, personal devotions and participated in small group Bible study and prayer (Chart 16).

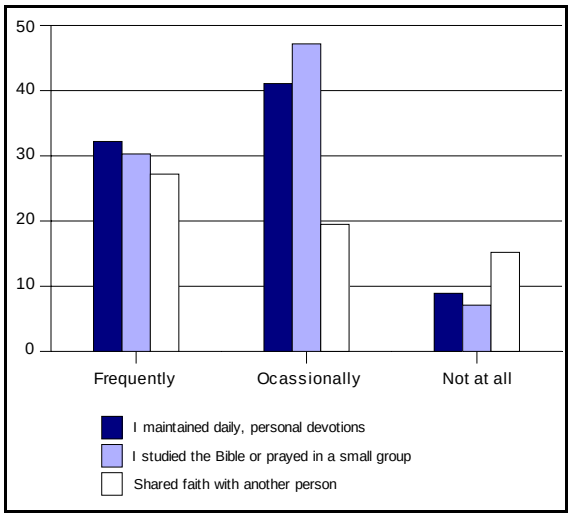

CHART 16. Engagement in spiritual disciplines

Graduates reported being involved in College-sponsored missions trips and off-campus ministries

Thirty-six percent of seniors reported participating in a College-sponsored missions trip while at NWC, and over 54 percent reported being involved in a local off-campus ministry during their years at Northwestern College (Chart 17).

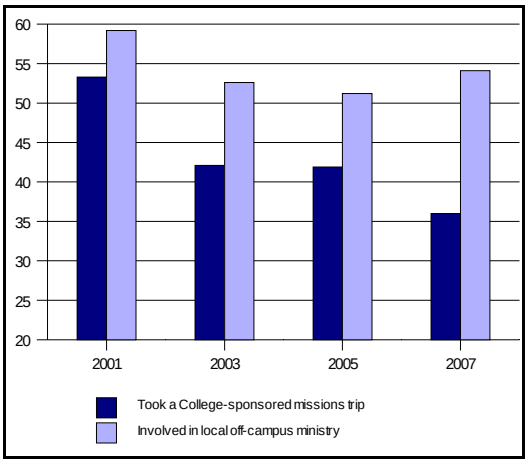

CHART 17. Involvement in missions/off-campus ministry

Graduates report involvement in on- and off-campus missions while a student at Northwestern College.

Freshmen indicate strong interest in missions

Incoming freshmen were asked on the ***CIRP*** questionnaire whether they hoped to participate in a missions trip while at Northwestern. Nearly 87 percent responded in the affirmative, a higher percent than in previous years (Chart 18).

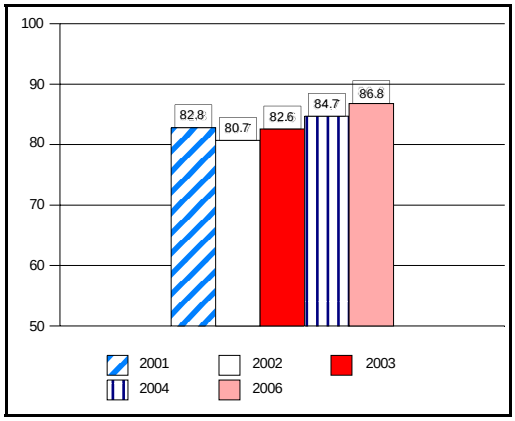

CHART 18. Participate in missions trip while at NWC

Nearly 85 percent of freshmen reported they intend to participate in a missions trip while at Northwestern.

Freshmen self-rating of spiritual commitment strong

A series of locally-generated questions were added to the ***CIRP*** asking freshmen to rate their level of agreement with statements related to their faith commitment. A high percentage of incoming freshmen were in agreement with each of these statements (Table 17).

	2006	2004	2002	2000
I have a personally meaningful relationship with God.	98.8	97.9	98.8	97.7
My relationship with God contributes to my sense of well-being.	97.6	97.8	98.3	98.9
Even if the people around me were opposed to my Christian convictions, I would still hold fast to them.	96.6	89.5	97.2	98.5
The way I do things from day to day is often affected by my relationship with God.	95.7	97.8	96.0	96.8
I feel like I need to be open to consider new insights and truths about my faith.	89.4	92.0	93.8	93.2

TABLE 17. Percent who selected *Agree or Strongly Agree* for statements of faith commitment

Freshmen were also asked on the ***CIRP*** to report the frequency of their participation in spiritual life activities. The choices they were given for each of the items was *Often*, *Sometimes*, or *Never*. Table 18 shows the percent who selected *Often*.

	2006	2004	2002	2000
Attended religious services	93.1	89.8	91.5	92.4
Maintained daily, personal devotions	40.5	49.2	50.6	44.0
Studied the Bible or prayed in a small group	49.9	48.3	53.7	48.8
Shared my faith with another person	31.5	28.1	35.8	30.2

TABLE 18. Percent who selected *Often* - participation in spiritual life activities

Alumni rate Northwestern's influence on attaining Spiritual Life Outcomes

On the ***Northwestern College Alumni Survey***, alumni rated the extent of the College's influence on their attaining each outcome. Items were rated on a scale of *Very Much* (5) to *None* (1). Table 19 also shows the percentage indicating the College's influence as *Very Much* or *Much*. All items met or exceeded the benchmark of 3.75 and 60 percent.

	Alumni Mean	% Much & Very Much
Knowledge of the Bible and theology	4.35	85.0
Developing a Christian worldview	4.08	80.0
Ability to interpret and apply biblical principles	4.03	78.4
Development of spiritual disciplines	3.75	65.0
Importance of missions and mission-mindedness	3.87	68.3

TABLE 19. Alumni rating of spiritual life outcomes

Majority of alumni continue to be active in Christian service

Table 20 shows the percent of alumni choosing levels of frequency for a variety of items related to their Christian walk.

	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Attended a local church	93.5	4.8	1.6	0
Serve in leadership in my church	56.5	24.2	9.7	9.7
Participate in some aspect of missions	53.2	37.1	8.1	1.6
Maintained daily, personal devotions	56.5	32.3	8.1	3.2
Studied the Bible or prayed in a small group	51.6	25.8	16.1	6.5
Shared my faith with another person	30.6	51.6	17.7	0

TABLE 20. Percent alumni response to items in Christian walk

Satisfaction with Academic Life

The majority of graduates report satisfaction with instruction

On the ***Northwestern College Senior Survey***, the percentage of graduates reporting they were *Very Satisfied* or *Satisfied* with the **overall quality of instruction** has remained near 90 percent or higher each year. Satisfaction with **instruction in the major field** has consistently been between 80 and 90 percent.

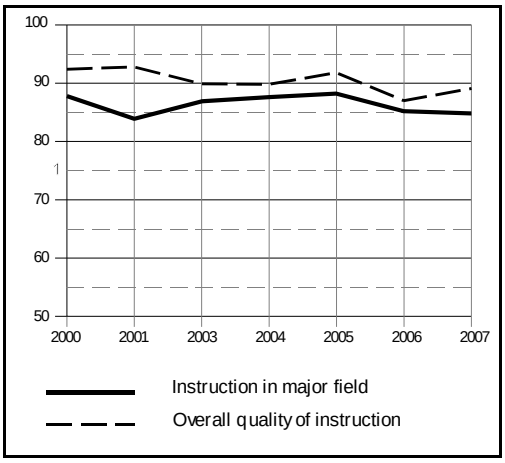

CHART 19. Satisfaction with overall instruction

Senior perspectives on their academic major

Seniors were asked their agreement with statements regarding their academic program. Table 21 indicates the percent who responded *Strongly Agree* or *Agree* to the item on the ***Northwestern College Senior Survey***.

My Academic Major...	Mean Score	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
encourages critical thinking	3.45	49.6	46.1	3.5	.7
integrates biblical perspectives	3.40	41.7	56.5	1.4	.4
is academically demanding	3.39	44.9	49.8	4.9	.4
has prepared me to be competent in my field	3.34	40.6	54.1	4.2	1.1
has prepared me for graduate school/advanced study	3.31	39.6	53.0	6.7	.7

TABLE 21. Senior perceptions of their academic major

The majority of NWC graduates have a positive view of faculty in their major field

On the ***Northwestern College Senior Survey***, seniors were asked their agreement with statements related to faculty in their major field. Results indicate high levels of agreement on a variety of faculty traits and behaviors. Chart 20 shows the percentage who *Strongly Agree* or *Agree* with each statement.

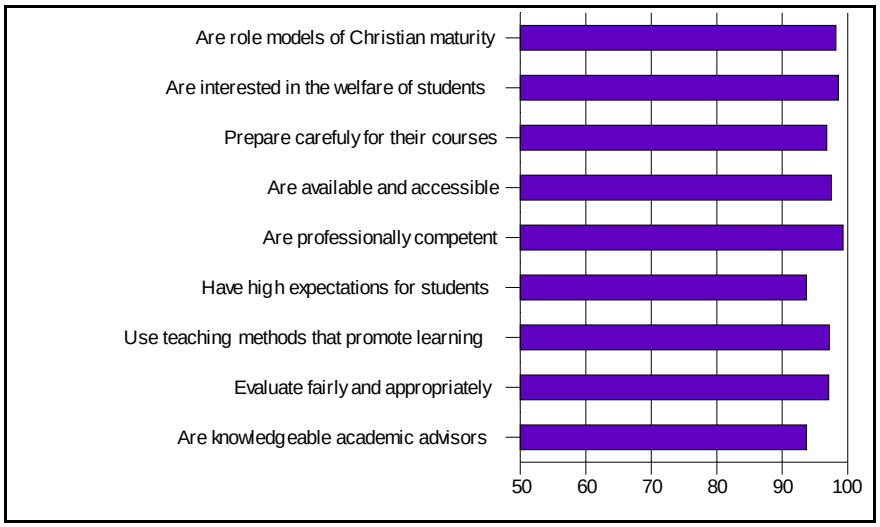

CHART 20. Graduate perceptions of faculty in major

Alumni rate their academic experience

On the ***Northwestern College Alumni Survey***, previous graduates were asked to rate their satisfaction with a number of items related to their academic experience. Chart 21 shows the percent of alumni who indicated they were *Very Satisfied* or *Satisfied* with the item.

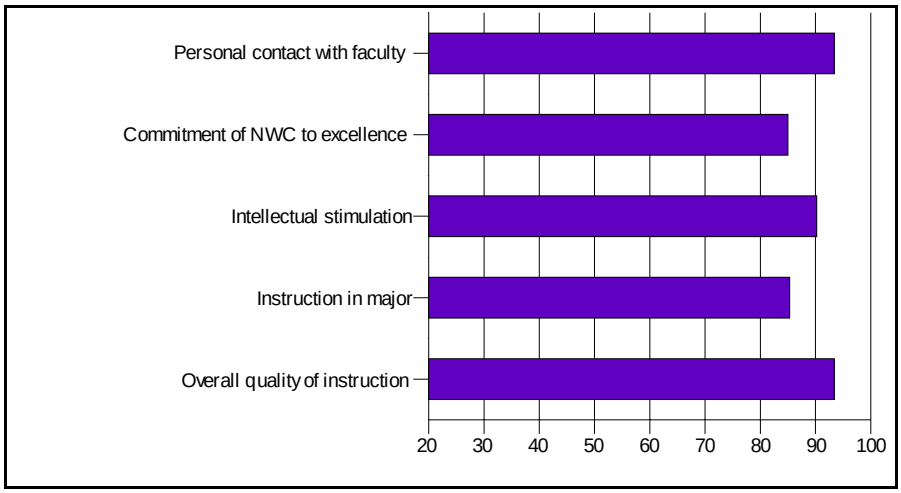

CHART 21. Alumni satisfaction with NWC experience

Over 90 percent of alumni report satisfaction with the overall quality of instruction received at Northwestern.

EXITING STUDENTS

What do they tell us?

Lack of program availability or uncertainty about the choice of an academic major contributed to the decision to exit for over a third of those completing the survey.

All full-time students voluntarily leaving Northwestern are asked to complete the ***Northwestern College Exiting Survey*** reporting their reasons for choosing to leave Northwestern. Those completing the survey are asked if a series of items impacted their decision to leave Northwestern. For each of these items, exiting students may indicate whether that item was a *Major Reason*, a *Contributing Reason*, or *Not a Reason*. Exiting students are also asked to indicate their purpose for attending Northwestern and their plans for re-enrolling.

Finances play largest role in reported reasons for leaving Northwestern

In 2006-2007, when *Major Reasons* and *Contributing Reasons* for leaving were combined, more than half (56.4 percent) of exiting students reported they were **transferring to a college where costs were less**. Over 40 percent reported leaving because **ability to pay fell short of expenses** (42.5) and because of **limited financial aid** (40.6). Over a fourth (25.7 percent) reported leaving because they **encountered unexpected expenses** (Table 22).

Academic performance surfaces as a reason to exit

Over a fourth of students completing the survey reported that they exited because they did not perform as well as they expected. Nearly 12 percent (11.9) indicated they left because **courses were too difficult**. Nearly the same percent reported that they exited because they were **not academically prepared for college work**. Nearly 16 percent selected as a reason to leave **my poor academic effort did not merit the expense**.

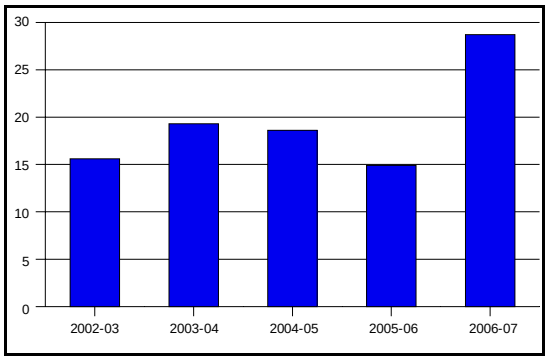

CHART 22. Percent exiting NWC - did not do as well as hoped

Factors contributing to the decision to leave Northwestern before completing a program

Reasons for exiting Northwestern College are shown in rank order on Table 22. The table shows the percentage of exiting students who indicated that the item contributed to their decision to leave Northwestern either as a *Major* or *Contributing Reason*.

	2006-07		2005-06	
	Rank	%	Rank	%
Transferring to a college where costs are less	1	56.4	1	56.4
Ability to pay fell short of expenses	2	42.5	3	45.5
Could not make it with limited financial aid	3	40.6	4	34.5
My major not offered	3	40.6	2	46.5
Uncertain about major	5	32.7	5	33.6
Did not do as well as hoped	6	28.7	12	14.9
Encountered unexpected expenses	7	25.7	6	32.7
Wanted a break from college	7	25.7	14	13.0
College rules and regulations too strict	9	22.8	10	20.0
NWC not a good doctrinal "fit" for me	10	20.8	16	9.4
Required to leave because of family issues	10	20.8	8	22.2
Health related problems	10	20.8	15	11.3
Unhappy with college housing	13	19.8	11	18.5
Felt alone or isolated	14	18.8	9	20.4
Moved to a new location	14	18.8	7	24.1
My poor academic effort did not merit the expense	16	15.8	17	9.3
Unhappy with quality of on-campus social activities	16	15.8	17	9.3
Dissatisfied with quality of advising	16	15.8	19	9.1
Courses too difficult	19	11.9	21	5.5
Desired major offered but content unsatisfactory	19	11.9	20	7.4
Not academically prepared for college work	21	10.9	22	5.5
Dissatisfied with quality of instruction	22	9.9	24	1.8
Unhappy with opportunities for spiritual growth	22	8.9	21	5.6
Courses not challenging	24	7.9	24	1.8
Problem with scheduling classes	24	7.9	13	14.8
Unhappy with campus services	26	3.9	26	0.0

Table 22. *Major* and *Contributing Reasons* for exiting Northwestern by rank

Over 20 percent of students exiting before completing a program planned to attend a "college with a Christian environment for a limited period of time."

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR COLLEGE WRITING (WCE)

This form is a locally designed instrument developed to measure levels of student attainment of objectives in upper-level courses with a Written Communication Emphasis (WCE) designation.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ORAL COMMUNICATION (OCE)

This instrument was developed by the Communication Department to measure levels of student attainment of oral communication objectives in upper-level courses with an Oral Communication Emphasis (OCE) designation.

COOPERATIVE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH PROJECT (CIRP)

The ***Freshmen Information Form*** was developed as a part of the **Cooperative Institutional Research Project (CIRP)** by the Higher Education Research Institute. The form provides data on incoming freshman opinions, perceptions, goals, and experiences.

GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATION

The ***Graduate Record Examination*** is produced and processed by the Educational Testing Service. GRE results compare Northwestern graduates with national norms in Verbal, Quantitative, Analytical Writing areas.

MC CROSKEY PERSONAL REPORT OF COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION (PRCA)

This instrument measures reported apprehension to speaking in public and private settings. It is given as a Pre and Post self-rating of public speaking anxiety in the required general education speech course.

NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE ALUMNI SURVEY

This instrument, developed with input from offices across the campus, queries alumni who have graduated from Northwestern in areas of occupation, satisfaction with their experience, outcomes, and connection of the College.

NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE EDITING COMPETENCY EXAMINATION

This instrument was developed by the English Department as a test of editing competency. The instrument has been positively correlated with the ***Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) Writing Exam***.

NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE EXITING SURVEY

This locally developed instrument is completed by all full-time students voluntarily leaving Northwestern College. The survey was designed to determine the purpose for entering Northwestern College, re-enrollment plans, and reasons for choosing to leave Northwestern College. The survey is given to non-returning and withdrawing students.

NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE SENIOR SURVEY

This locally developed instrument was designed to survey vocational information, student plans, activities, levels of satisfaction with NWC programs and services, and perceived College outcomes. Questions have been tailored to the distinctives of Northwestern College.