Assessment Annual 2002-2003

Highlights of the 2002-2003 Assessment Results.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2002 Freshmen Data 1

Educational Outcomes 7

Spiritual and Ethical Outcomes 13

Satisfaction with Academic Life 17

Satisfaction with Campus Life 19

Exiting Students ✦ What do they tell us? 21

Assessment Instruments 24

Charts

1. Northwestern College as first choice 1
2. Racial background of incoming freshmen 2
3. Percentages earning an “A” average in high school 2
4. Perceived abilities of incoming freshmen 3
5. Perceived writing ability and physical health 3
6. Highest degree planned 4
7. Parents divorced or separated 6
8. Self-rated “Above Average” in writing ability 7
9. College influence on *Speaking Clearly* and *Effectively* 10
10. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* abilities and skills by group 12
11. Mean scores for GRE exams by year 12
12. Satisfaction with spiritual life on campus 13
13. Attendance at a local churches 14
14. Support for a local church 14
15. Percent of students who met in accountability relationship 14
16. Engagement in spiritual disciplines 15
17. Involvement in missions 15
18. Participate in missions trip while at Northwestern College 16
19. Satisfaction with overall instruction by year 17
20. Satisfaction with overall instruction 17
21. Graduate perceptions of faculty 18
22. Percent of graduates involved in events 18
23. Satisfaction with overall College experience 19
24. Percent satisfied with campus services by group 20
25. Percent indicating financial reasons for exiting by year 21
26. Plans to return to NWC by year 22
27. Percentage selecting item as reason for exiting 22

Tables

1. Reasons for selecting NWC 4
2. Life objectives viewed as essential 5
3. Level of concern about financing college 6
4. Percent of upper-class papers failing in each of the WCE writing skills criteria 8
5. WCE rating 8
6. Percentage passing the NWC Editing Competency Exam by term and year 9
7. Mean scores: PRCA speech anxiety scale 10
8. Percent of presentations falling into each of the OCE criteria 11
9. Rank of 31 Educational Outcomes 13
10. Percent who were *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with campus life year 19
11. Percentage selecting items as a reason for exiting 23

2002 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 2002 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. Forty percent did not apply anywhere else.

Northwestern was the first choice of most incoming freshmen

Over 90 percent of incoming freshmen reported that Northwestern College was their first choice. This number was substantially higher than the national private college sample of 71 percent and somewhat higher than the CCCU sample of 84.6 percent (Chart 1). Forty percent of NWC freshmen did not apply at any other institution compared with 18.6 percent in the national private sample and 32.3 percent in the CCCU sample.

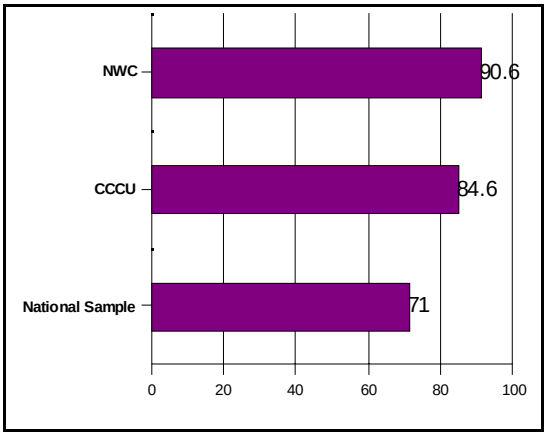

CHART 1. Northwestern College as first choice

Most freshmen are close to home

Over 93 percent of 2002 freshmen reported that Northwestern College is within a day's drive from home (500 miles). Nearly half (48.7 percent) of their families live within 100 miles of the College, higher than the CCCU sample of 41.5 percent.

The percentage of minority students entering NWC remains low

The percentage of incoming freshmen reporting a racial background other than White/Caucasian was the lowest in the last eight years at 2.9 percent. Northwestern's incoming class represented less racial diversity than those of the CCCU (10.3 percent) or students in national private colleges (13.7 percent) (Chart 2).

Nearly 60 percent of incoming freshmen reported receiving A's in high school.

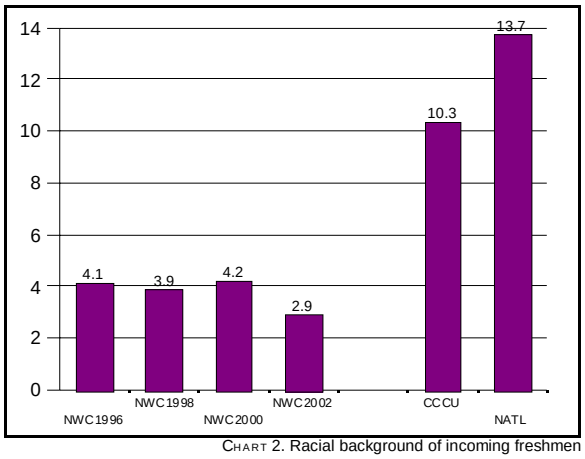

CHART 2. Racial background of incoming freshmen

High school grades

The percentage of freshmen reporting high school grades in the "A" range remained near 60 percent in 2002. This percentage was slightly lower than in 2000, but was higher than grades reported by freshmen in the CCCU (55.2 percent) and the national private samples (44.6 percent) (Chart 3).

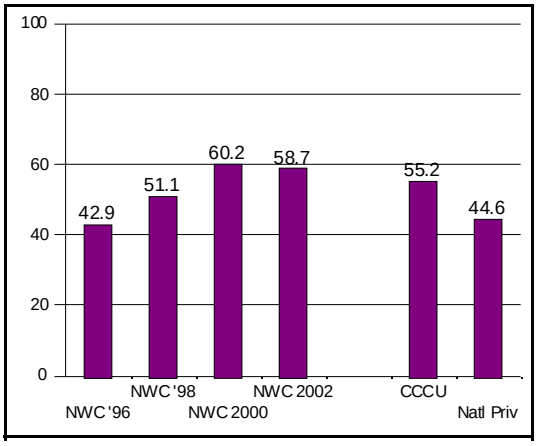

CHART 3. Percentages earning an "A" average in high school

Parents' education

Fathers of 60 percent of incoming freshmen have completed a college degree and 20 percent have earned a graduate degree. These numbers are 52 percent and 8.5 percent for mothers of incoming freshmen. The percentage of parents with college degrees is the highest ever reported by Northwestern freshmen.

Freshmen self-rating of abilities

The *Freshmen Information Form* asks freshmen to rate themselves on a number of abilities. Chart 4 shows the percentage of freshmen in 2002 who ranked themselves as *above average* as compared to other college freshmen. Freshmen rated themselves highest in **spirituality, cooperativeness**, **the ability to understand others, academic ability** and the **drive to achieve**. These traits were also ranked highest by freshmen in the CCCU sample.

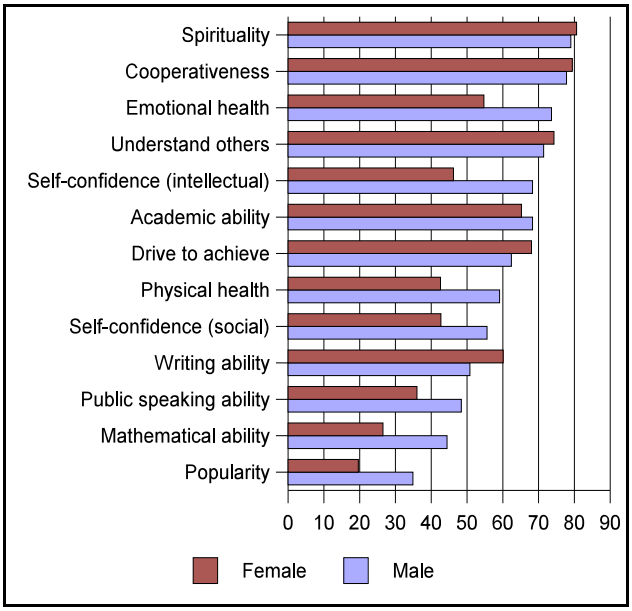

CHART 4. Perceived abilities of incoming freshmen

Female freshmen rate themselves lower than male freshmen for most traits and abilities.

Gender differences for a number of items are striking with female freshmen rating themselves lower than male freshmen for a number of traits. Interestingly, while rating themselves similar to males in **academic ability**, they rated their **intellectual self-confidence** significantly lower than did males (Chart 4).

Freshmen self-rating of writing ability higher, physical health lower than in previous years

Freshmen self-assessment of **writing ability** rose in 2002 from previous years, while perceived **physical health** declined significantly (Chart 5).

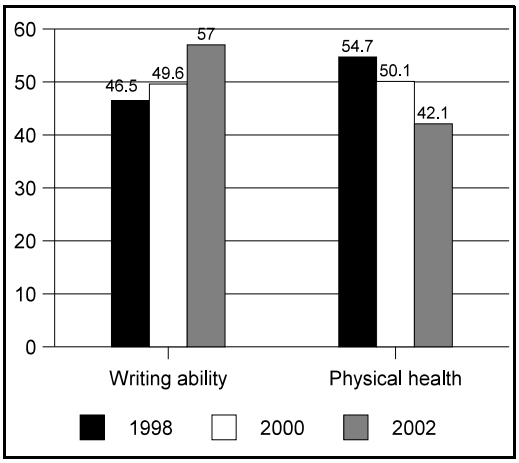

CHART 5. Perceived writing ability and physical health

Academic reputation declined 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 **size of the college academic reputation, good social reputation** and **grads go to top grad schools** were the lowest ever recorded, while **offered financial assistance** increased somewhat as a reason for selecting NWC in 2002 (Table 1).

Freshmen consistently report "Religious orientation" is their top reason for selecting Northwestern College.

Reason for Selecting NWC	2002	2000	1998	1996
Religious orientation	**84.9%**	86.8%	80.8%	85.2%
Size of the college	**47.1%**	50.3%	47.4%	58.2%
Academic reputation	**44.4%**	54.5%	46.8%	46.9%
Financial assistance offered	**35.6%**	31.7%	37.3%	37.0%
Good Social reputation	**21.7%**	37.6%	30.8%	22.3%
Special programs	**17.5%**	17.1%	15.5%	17.6%
Live near home	**14.5%**	13.9%	14.5%	14.6%
Grads go to top grad schools	**4.0%**	9.2%	12.1%	7.1%

TABLE 1. Reasons for selecting NWC

Freshmen plans to complete graduate degrees in the future declined dramatically in 2002

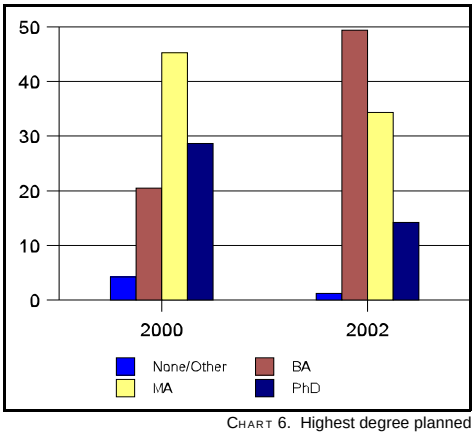

CHART 6. Highest degree planned

Only 48.6 percent of 2002 freshmen reported planning to complete graduate degrees in the future. This number was significantly lower than the nearly 74 percent in 2000. In the CCCU sample of 2002 freshmen, the percentage reported planning to complete graduate degrees was 62.8 percent, down from 76.3 percent in 2000.

The majority of freshmen plan to complete degrees, work to pay expenses and earn at least a B average

Over 85 percent of 2002 freshmen indicated they plan to **earn a bachelor's degree** at Northwestern. This percentage is slightly higher than the CCCU sample percentage of 82.3 percent and the national private sample of 76.5 percent. Over 70 percent, the highest ever, reported they will **need to get a job to pay expenses**. Nearly two-thirds expect to **earn a B average**. Fewer freshmen than in the past expect to **change their major, participate in student groups/clubs** or **play varsity athletics**.

Spirituality heads list of life objectives considered essential by freshmen

The most essential objective for NWC freshmen was to **integrate spirituality into their life**. Other objectives that were viewed as essential were **raising a family, helping others in difficulty, developing a philosophy of life** and **influencing social values.** 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** (Table 2).

The most essential objective for NWC freshmen was to integrate spirituality into their life. Being well-off financially was rated low in importance.

Essential Life Objectives	NWC	CCCU	NATL
Integrate spirituality into my life	**94.2%**	88.9%	41.0%
Raise a family	**86.4%**	84.7%	70.0%
Help others in difficulty	**73.6%**	76.1%	62.0%
Influence social values	**58.9%**	52.6%	40.9%
Develop a philosophy of life	**44.7%**	42.2%	44.9%
Become authority in my field	**40.9%**	48.5%	60.2%
Become a community leader	**30.7%**	34.1%	32.5%
Be well off financially	**28.1%**	40.8%	67.5%

TABLE 2. Life objectives viewed as essential

Percentage of freshmen with divorced or separated parents remains lower than other samples

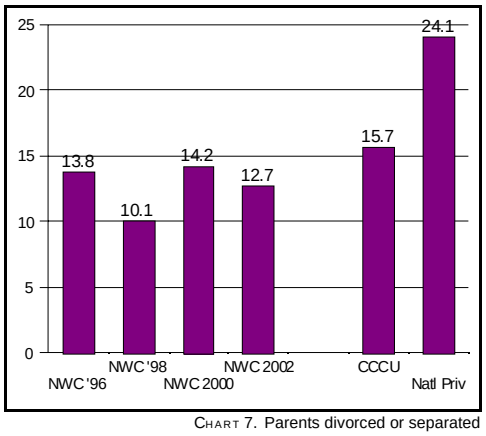

CHART 7. Parents divorced or separated

Fewer freshmen reported that financing their college education was a "major concern" than in any previous year.

Both parents are married and living together for 85.0 percent of NWC freshmen (Chart 7), higher than in 2000 and higher than the CCCU or the national private samples. Slightly over two percent of incoming freshmen reported that one or more of their parents was deceased.

Freshmen concerns about finances decreased in 2002

The smallest percentage of freshmen ever indicated that financing their college education was a *Major Concern.* The percent reporting they have *No Concern* decreased slightly while the percentage with *Some Concern* increased slightly over previous years. Northwestern freshmen report more concern with finances than freshmen in the CCCU sample.

	2002	2000	1998	1996	CCCU 2002
No Concern	21.8%	22.4%	18.5%	13.6%	29.6%
Some Concern	59.8%	56.8%	55.6%	50.2%	54.1%
Major Concern	18.4%	20.7%	25.9%	36.3%	16.3%

TABLE 3. 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.

The majority of graduating seniors reported NWC had *much* influence on their writing ability

The percentage of graduates who reported NWC had "Very Much" influence on their writing skills increased in 2003.

Seniors who graduated in 2003 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 20 percent of seniors graduating in 2003 reported that Northwestern had *Very Much* influence on their attainment of the outcome to **express ideas clearly in writing**. Over 43 percent indicated the College had *Much* influence on their attainment of that objective, and 32.2 percent indicated only *Average* influence. These results are compared to those obtained from NWC graduates in 2000 and 2001 in Chart 8.

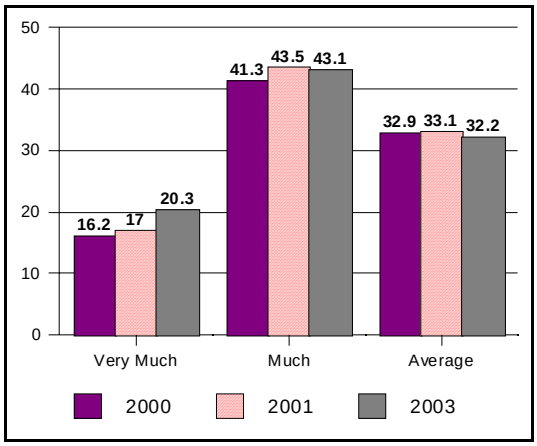

CHART 8. Self-rated "Above Average" in writing ability

Writing skills of students in WCE courses receive high ratings by NWC professors

NWC professors judged upper-level writing skills to be strongest in Mechanics and weakest in Documentation.

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 4 shows the percentage of papers judged to be either *Strong*, *Average* or *Weak* in the four focus areas. The goal of 60 percent *Strong* ratings was reached for all areas. Table 5 shows the rating for each of the criteria evaluated.

Criteria	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Not Applicable
Content	68.8%	26.9%	4.3%	—
Style	71.4%	24.6%	4.0%	—
Mechanics	76.0%	18.1%	4.9%	—
Documentation	44.0% (64.3%)*	18.8%	5.7%	31.6%

TABLE 4. Percent of upper-class papers falling in each of the WCE writing skills criteria

* Excluding *Not Applicable*

Content	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Clear thesis or controlling idea(s)	73.2%	23.2%	3.5%
Major components of composition clear and related to thesis or controlling idea(s)	70.1%	26.4%	3.5%
Specific, accurate evidence or relevant, effective details	69.8%	26.7%	3.5%
Coherent sequence and transitions between points	68.2%	27.3%	4.5%
Critical analysis of content	62.6%	30.8%	4.0%
Style			
Appropriate word choice for the audience	74.2%	25.3%	.5%
Clear syntax (absence of awkward or confusing sentences)	62.5%	26.0%	11.5%
Proper tone and mood for the audience and assignment	77.5%	22.5%	0%
Mechanics			
Correct spelling	78.6%	16.8%	4.6%
Proper use of commonly confused words	84.6%	13.9%	11.5%
Suitable punctuation	71.8%	24.3%	4.0%
Grammatically acceptable usage	69.0%	21.3%	9.6%

Documentation	Strong	Adequate	Weak	Not Applicable
Sufficient documentation	43.7%	16.8%	7.6%	32.0%
Correct documentation	44.3% (64.3%)*	20.8%	3.6%	31.2%

TABLE 5. WCE rating

* Excluding *Not Applicable*

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

All students completing *ENG1105 College Composition* and *ENG1825 Honors College Composition* are required to take the NWC Editing Competency Exam as a prerequisite for *ENG2205 Argumentative Research Writing*. 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 College Composition* (ENG1825) passed the exam on the first attempt in 2002-2003 (Table 6).

Course	1997-1998			1998-1999			1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003	
	F	W	S	F	W	S	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S
ENG1105	96%	82%	80%	97.8%	95.6%	84.7%	71.2%	79.5%	84.3%	68.1%	82.5%	82.2%	90.3%	88.0%
ENG1825	100%	100%	NA	100%	100%	NA	92%	95.7%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

TABLE 6. Percentage passing the NWC Editing Competency Exam by term and year

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

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 *Much* or *Very Much* influence on **speaking clearly and effectively** has increased each of the last three administrations.

For the fourth year, results of the PRCA show speech anxiety is reduced for students completing SPE1075.

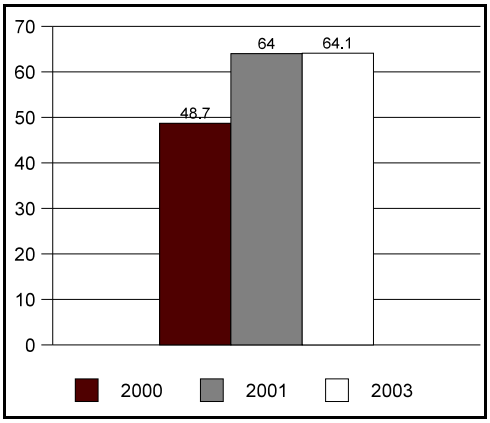

CHART 9. College influence on *Speaking Clearly and Effectively*

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 7).

	Pre	Post
Group discussions	2.21	1.99
Meetings	2.39	2.16
Conversation	2.43	2.08
Public speaking	2.98	2.70
Total	2.45	2.24

TABLE 7. 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 8 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.

Thesis/Purpose	Strong	Average	Weak
Message is appropriate to the audience	91.2%	8.2%	0.6%
Purpose/thesis is clearly presented	73.9%	21.4%	4.7%
Organization	**Strong**	**Average**	**Weak**
Ideas are clear, logical and effectively arranged	66.4%	28.1%	5.6%
Includes relevant introduction and conclusion	68.3%	26.7%	5.0%
Support Material	**Strong**	**Average**	**Weak**
Specific, credible, relevant sources used as appropriate	72.1%	23.5%	4.4%
Delivery	**Strong**	**Average**	**Weak**
Manner is confident	43.2%	50.0%	6.8%
Body language is appropriate (i.e., gestures, movements)	42.2%	50.6%	7.2%
Makes visual connections	53.4%	39.1%	7.5%
Use of voice is effective (voice inflections such as tone, cadence, rate, etc. are appropriate)	47.5%	46.3%	6.2%

TABLE 8. Percent of presentations falling into each of the OCE criteria

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

Other general education outcomes

The extent of the College's influence on the attainment of a variety of educational outcomes was measured on the Northwestern 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. Highest increases were in **learning to use technology, developing leadership skills**, **developing openness to new ideas**, and **learning to think critically** and **ability to perform research.**

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

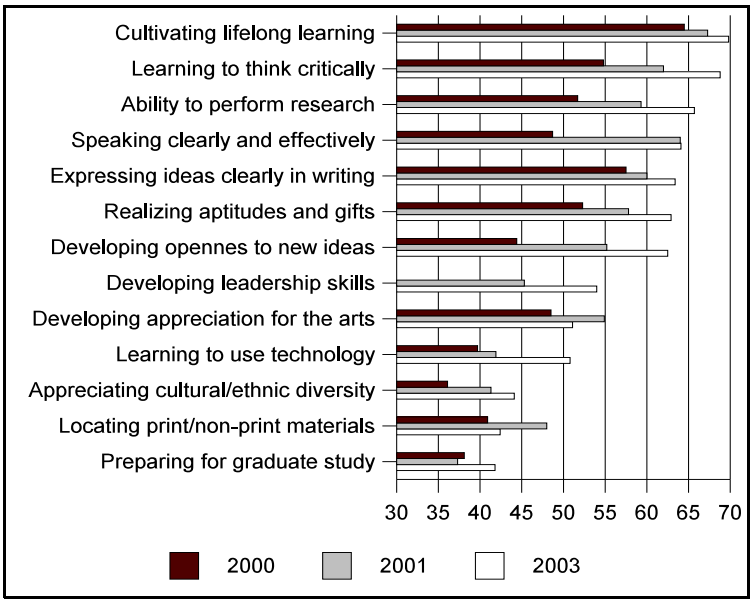

CHART 10. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* abilities and skills by group

GRE scores rise again in 2002

Mean scores on the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) achieved by Northwestern graduates and alumni have shown increases in all areas - Verbal, Quantitative and Analytical - since 1999 (Chart 11).

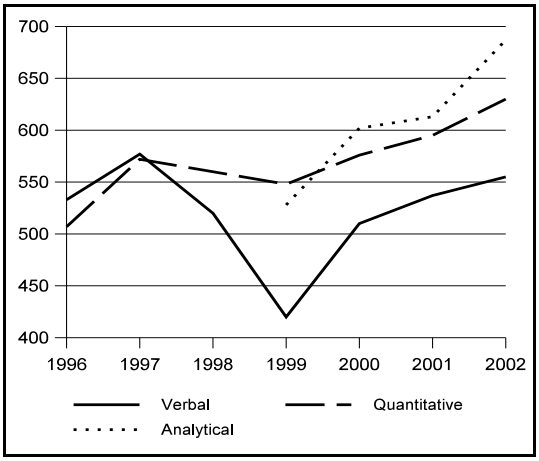

CHART 11. Mean scores for GRE exams by year

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 NWC Senior Survey results indicate that Northwestern made a strong contribution to student's **knowledge of the Bible and Christian doctrine**, and on their **development of a Christian worldview** and a **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 9).

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

	2003	2001	2000	1999
Acquiring knowledge of the Bible	**1**	**1**	2	3 (T)
Developing a Christian world view	**2**	**2**	3	1
Relating my faith to my major	**3**	**3**	1	3 (T)
Developing a maturing faith in Christ	**4**	**4**	5	2

(T = tie)

TABLE 9. Rank of 31 Educational Outcomes

Satisfaction with campus spiritual climate highest ever

Over three-fourths of graduating seniors reported they were *Satisfied* and *Very Satisfied* or with the **College's spiritual climate**, the highest ever reported. **Satisfaction with chapel** and **other spiritual life experiences on campus** also increased over previous administrations of the survey (Chart 12).

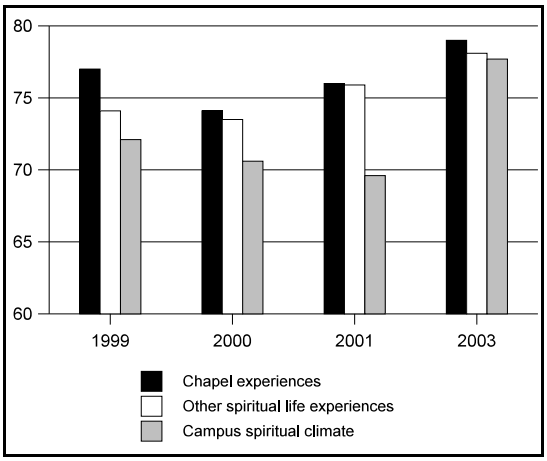

CHART 12. Satisfaction with spiritual life on campus

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 (Charts 13 and 14).

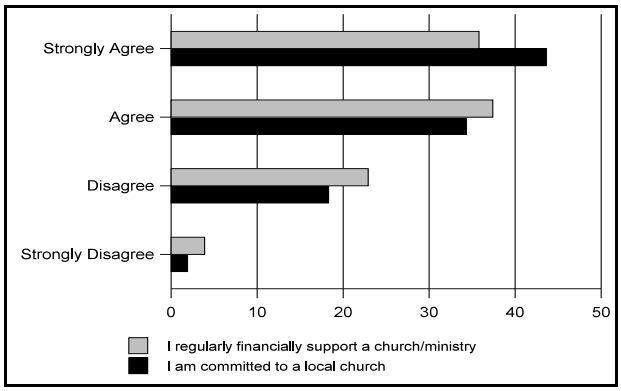

CHART 14. Support for a local church

Seniors' response to:

How often do you attend a local church?

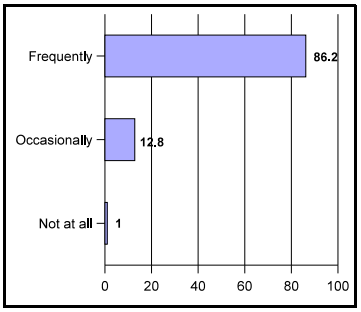

CHART 13. Attendance at local churches

Graduates report accountability to another person played a role in their spiritual life

Sixty percent of seniors reported they participated, at least occasionally, in an accountability relationship with another student. Nearly a third reported they were involved in this type of relationship with a faculty or staff member (Chart 15).

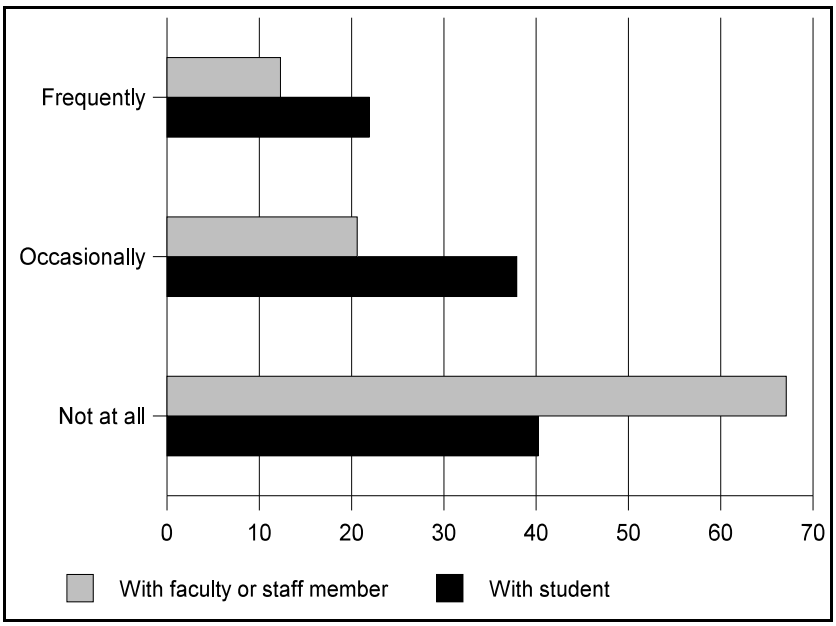

CHART 15. Percent of students who met in accountability relationship

Seniors report consistent engagement in spiritual disciplines

Over 90 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).

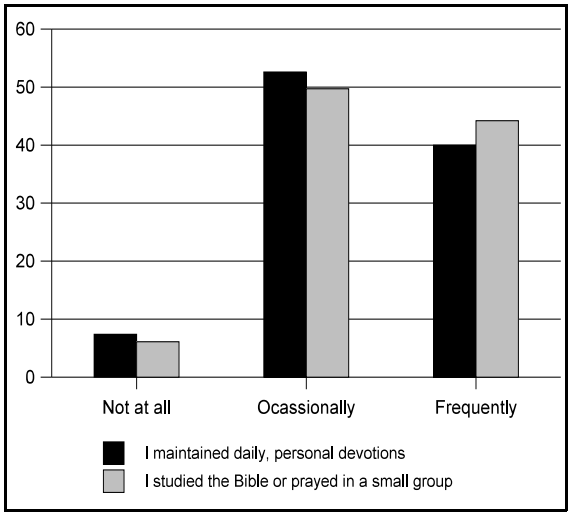

CHART 16. Engagement in spiritual disciplines

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

During their years at Northwestern College, 42.1 percent participated in a College-sponsored missions trip and over 50 percent reported being involved in a local off-campus ministry while a student. Both of these percentages were a decrease from the highs in 2001 (Chart 17).

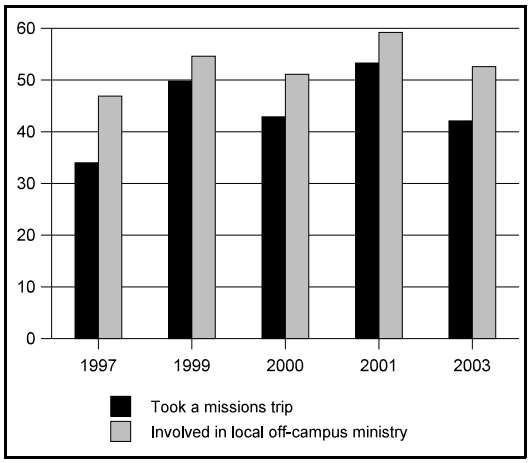

CHART 17. Involvement in missions

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

Freshmen indicate strong interest in missions

In the FYI Evaluation Survey given during the Freshmen Seminar, all freshmen were asked whether they hoped to participate in a missions trip while at Northwestern. Over 80 percent responded positively. This percentage is similar to the response of freshmen in 2001.

Over 80 percent of freshmen reported they intend to participate in missions trip while at Northwestern.

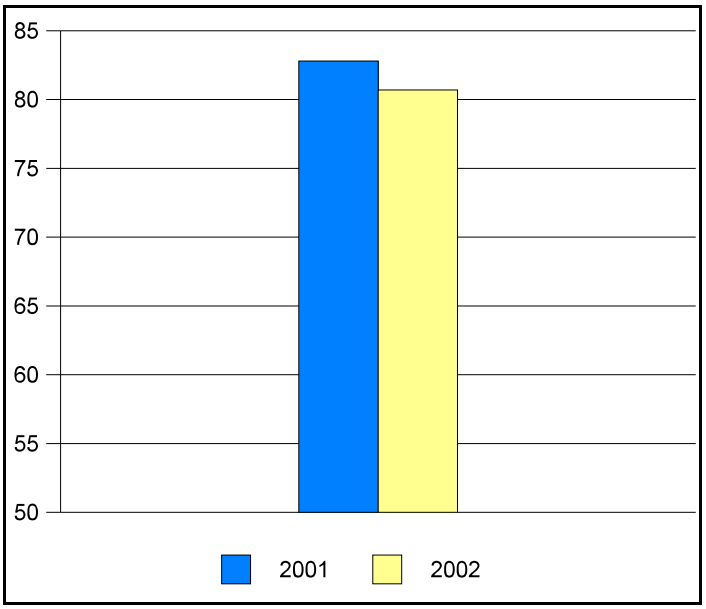

CHART 18. Participate in missions trip while at Northwestern College

Satisfaction with Academic Life

The majority of graduates report satisfaction with overall instruction and instruction in their major field

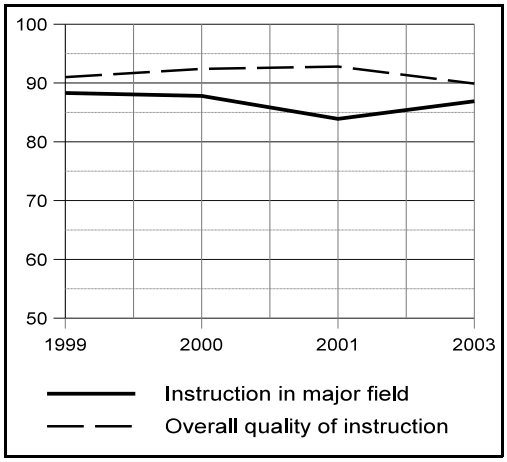

CHART 19. Satisfaction with overall instruction by year

On the Northwestern College Senior Survey graduates were asked to indicate their satisfaction with a number of items on a scale of *Very Satisfied*, *Satisfied*, *Neutral* and *Dissatisfied*.

The percentage of graduates reporting they were *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with the **overall quality of instruction** has remained at 90 percent or higher each year. Satisfaction with **instruction in the major field** has consistently been between 90 and 80 percent.

Northwestern graduates reported higher levels of satisfaction with overall instruction than seniors in the CCCU and the national private college samples.

2003 NWC graduate satisfaction with overall instruction higher than other sample groups

Nearly 90 percent of 2003 NWC graduates reported they were S*atisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with **overall instruction**. This percentage was higher than levels of satisfaction reported by seniors in the CCCU and national private college samples on a similar survey question.

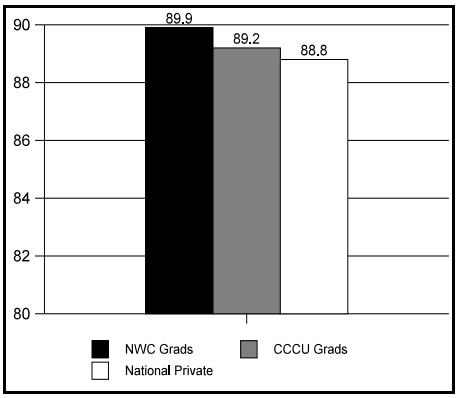

CHART 20. Satisfaction with overall instruction

The majority of NWC graduates have 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 21 shows the percentage who *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* with the statement.

The majority of graduates reported that faculty in their major field were role models of Christian maturity.

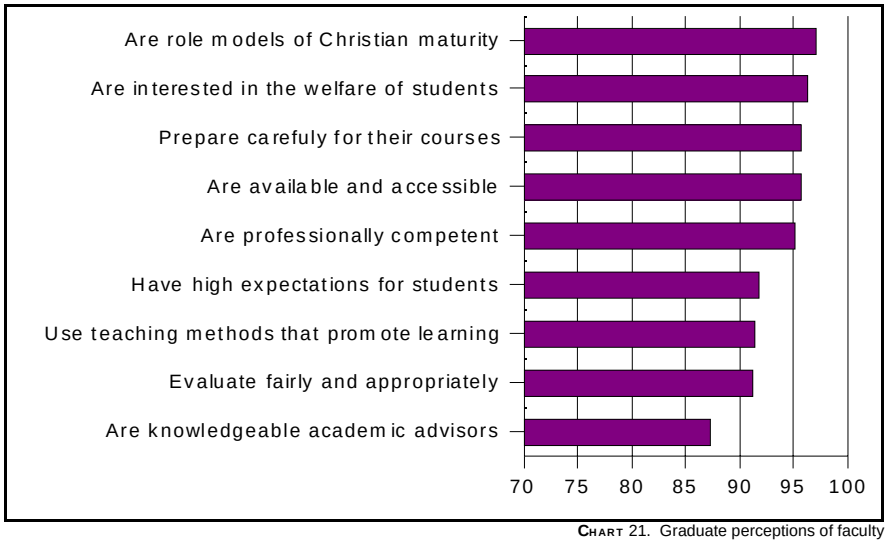

CHART 21. Graduate perceptions of faculty

Graduates were involved in internships and service projects while at NWC

Over 61 percent of NWC graduates were involved in an internship during their years at Northwestern, the highest percentage ever. Nearly 86 percent also reported participating in a volunteer or service activity while a student, also higher than in previous years.

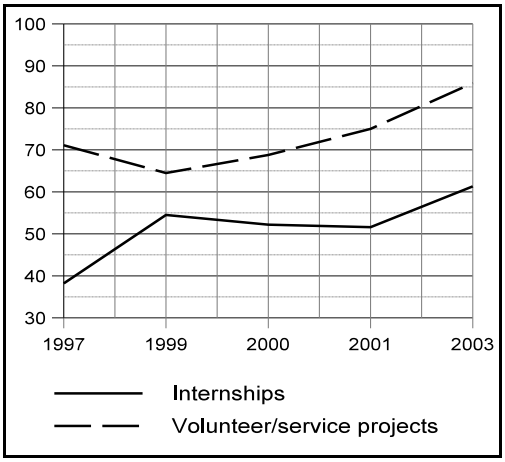

CHART 22. Percent of graduates involved in events

Satisfaction with Campus Life

Overall graduate satisfaction with the NWC experience remains high

Graduating seniors have consistently reported high levels of satisfaction with the **overall college experience** at Northwestern. The percentage who indicates they were *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* has differed only slightly since 1996.

Over 90 percent of graduates reported being satisfied with their experience at Northwestern.

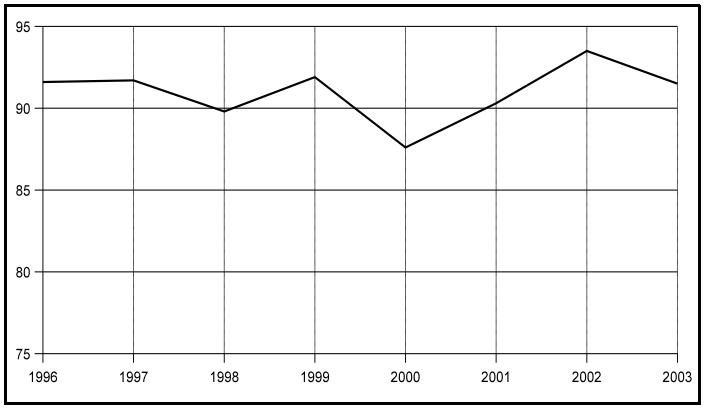

CHART 23. Satisfaction with overall College experience

Satisfaction with sense of community on campus shows increase

Graduate satisfaction with **student housing** increased in 2003 to the highest levels ever reported. Satisfaction with the **sense of community on campus** also grew in 2003. The percentage reporting satisfaction with **service/volunteer opportunities** and **leadership opportunities on campus** has remained relatively constant over the last several administrations of the Northwestern Senior Survey.

Campus Life	2003	2001	2000	1999
Student housing	88.4%	85.3%	84.5%	82.7%
Service/volunteer opportunities	78.2%	76.4%	79.0%	75.4%
Sense of community on campus	81.6%	73.0%	67.5%	67.0%
Leadership opportunities	74.4%	72.9%	76.4%	72.4%

TABLE 10. Percent who were *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with campus life by year

The majority of graduates expressed satisfaction with campus services

On the Northwestern Senior Survey graduates were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with a number of services offered on campus. Graduates expressed highest satisfaction with **attitudes of staff toward students**. Over three-fourths of the seniors reported they were *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with **housing facilities, Registrar's office services,** and **health services.** A majority of graduates surveyed expressed satisfaction with other services offered on campus (Chart 24).

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

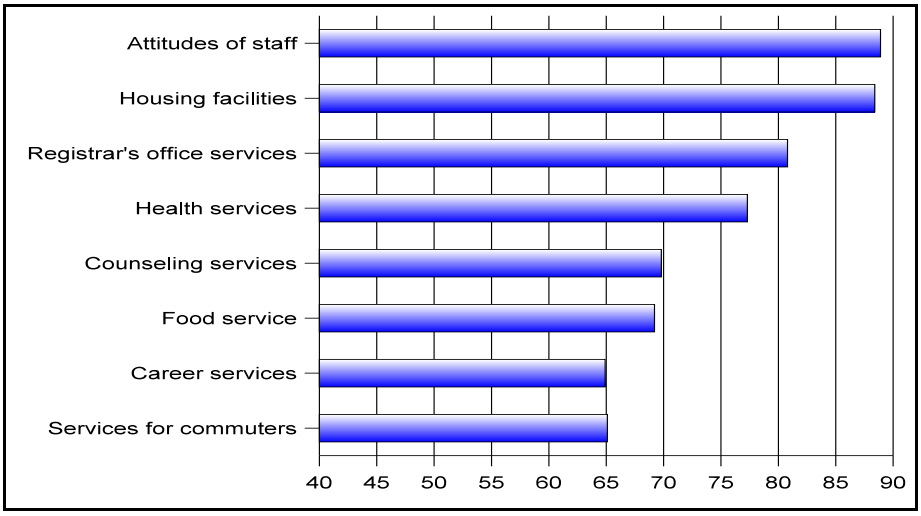

CHART 24. Percent satisfied with campus services by group

EXITING STUDENTS

What do they tell us?

All full-time students voluntarily leaving Northwestern are asked to complete a survey indicating reasons for choosing to leave Northwestern. Those completing the survey are asked to select their reasons for leaving from a series of items. For each of these items, exiting students may indicate whether that item was a *Major Reason*, a *Minor Reason*, or *Not a Reason*. Exiting students are also asked to indicate their purpose for attending Northwestern and their plans for re-enrolling. Of the 183 students leaving NWC during 2002-2003, 121 or 66.1 percent completed the survey.

The percentage of exiting students citing financial reasons for leaving increased in 2002-03.

Finances play large role in reported reason for leaving Northwestern

In 2002-2003, when *Major Reasons* and *Minor Reasons* for leaving were combined, nearly half (48.8 percent) of exiting students reported they were **transferring to a college where costs were less** and because of **lack of ability to pay** (46.3 percent). Nearly forty percent reported leaving because of **limited financial aid** and over 30 percent indicated they **encountered unexpected expenses**. In comparison with previous years, these percentages were the highest ever.

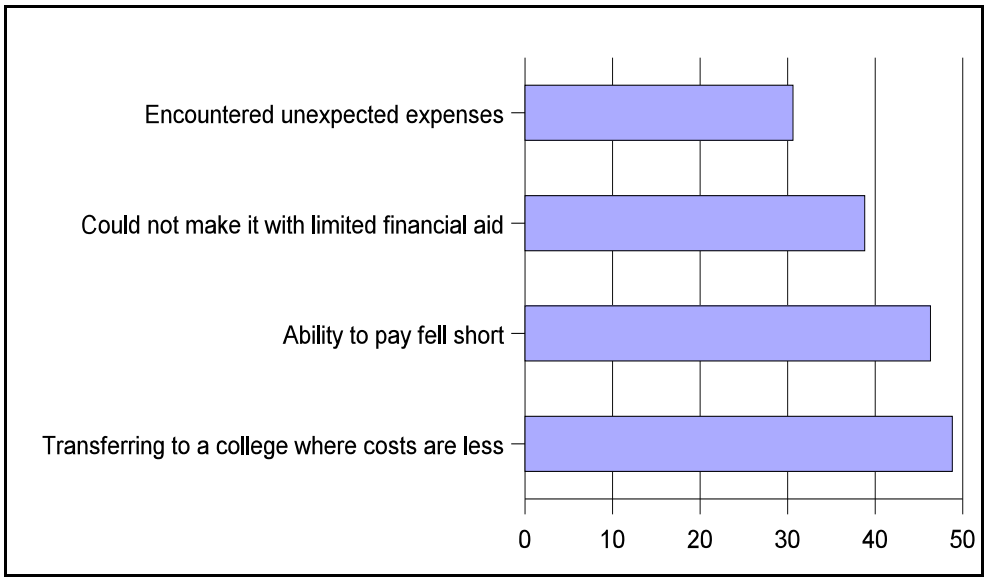

CHART 25. Percent indicating financial reasons for exiting by year

Percentage of exiting students who plan to return was highest ever

The percentage of exiting students reporting they plan to return has been approximately 20-25 percent for the past several years. In 2002-2003, exiting students reporting they plan to return to Northwestern increased to nearly 30 percent. In addition, the percentage who do not plan to return is the lowest ever at 43.8 percent.

Nearly 30 percent of exiting students report they plan to return to Northwestern.

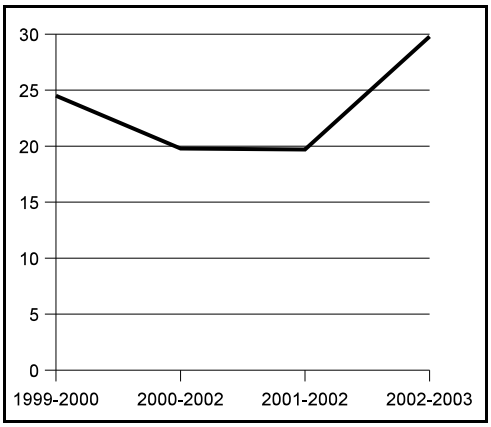

CHART 26. Plans to return to NWC by year

Difficulty of courses a minimal factor in decision to leave Northwestern

Slightly more than 11 percent selected **courses not challenging** as a reason for exiting. Of this number, it was a *Major Reason* for 2.5 percent. Less than half that percentage selected **courses too difficult**; only 1 percent as a *Major Reason*. For both of these items, the response was the lowest in several years (Chart 27).

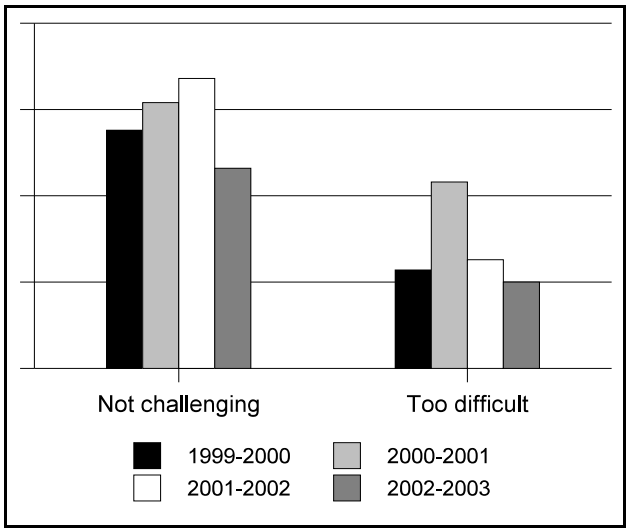

CHART 27. Percentage selecting item as reason for exiting

Factors contributing to the decision to leave

Table 11 shows the percentage of exiting students indicating that the item contributed to their decision to leave Northwestern either as a *Major* or *Minor Reason*.

	% Major Reason	% Major & Minor Reason
I felt called to make a change	35.5%	55.4%
Transferring to a college where costs are less	27.3%	48.8%
Ability to pay fell short of expenses	30.6%	46.3%
Could not make it with limited financial aid	23.1%	38.8%
Encountered unexpected expenses	14.9%	30.6%
Wanted a break from college	5.8%	27.3%
Required to leave because of family issues	11.6%	21.5%
My major not offered	15.7%	21.5%
NWC not a good doctrinal “fit” for me	8.3%	21.5%
Felt alone or isolated	6.6%	20.1%
College rules and regulations too strict	7.4%	19.0%
Uncertain about major	7.4%	18.2%
Problem with scheduling classes	5.8%	16.5%
Moved to a new location	12.3%	16.5%
Dissatisfied with quality of instruction	3.3%	15.7%
Did not do as well as hoped	2.5%	15.7%
Desired major offered but content unsatisfactory	4.1%	14.0%
Did not feel welcome at NWC	4.1%	14.0%
No program met career goals	7.4%	13.2%
Unhappy with college housing	4.1%	11.6%
Unhappy with quality of campus social activities	3.3%	13.2%
Unhappy with on-campus spiritual growth activities	6.0%	13.2%
Health related problems	8.3%	13.2%
Dissatisfied with quality of advising	2.5%	11.6%
Courses not challenging	2.5%	11.6%
My poor academic effort did not merit the expense	2.5%	9.9%
Unhappy with campus services	6.0%	9.1%
Not academically prepared for college work	.1%	5.8%
Courses too difficult	.1%	5.0%

Unable to find adequate housing
College rules and regulations not strict e

TABLE 11. Percentage selecting items as a reason for exiting

Over 20 percent of exiting students reported they left alone or isolated.

ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

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.

FRESHMEN INFORMATION FORM

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

FYI EVALUATION SURVEY

This survey is administered to incoming freshmen at the completion of FYI (First Year In), a required freshmen seminar.

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

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 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.

OCE ✦ ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ORAL COMMUNICATION

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.

WCE ✦ ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR COLLEGE WRITING

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.