2003-04 Assessment Annual

NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE _ ST. PAUL, MN

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Educational Outcomes 1
Written Communication 1
Oral Communication 4
Other General Education Outcomes 6

Spiritual and Ethical Outcomes 7

Satisfaction with Academic Life 11

Satisfaction with Campus Life 13

Overall Satisfaction 15

2004 Seniors ✦ Freshmen to Senior Year Changes 18

Exiting Students ✦ What do they tell us? 24

2003-2004 Assessment Instruments 26

Charts

1. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* writing skills by year . . . 1
2. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* writing skills by group . . . 1
3. Percent of seniors rating self Above Average in writing skills . . . 1
4. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* speaking skills . . . 4
5. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* abilities and skills by group . . . 6
6. GRE percentile scores by year . . . 6
7. Percent viewing "Spirituality" an essential value . . . 7
8. Percent reporting satisfaction with campus spiritual life . . . 9
9. Reported engagement in spiritual disciplines . . . 9
10. Percent freshmen interested in participating in a mission trip while at NWC . . . 10
11. Percent reporting satisfaction with instruction by year. . . . 11
12. Percent satisfaction with instruction by group . . . 12
13. Percent satisfaction with instructional characteristics by group . . . 12
14. Percent satisfaction with campus services . . . 13
15. Student satisfaction with campus life by group . . . 14
16. Percent satisfied with overall College experience . . . 15
17. Percent responses to "enroll again" item . . . 15
18. Mean score: Overall satisfaction by group . . . 16
19. Mean score: Satisfaction with college choice by group . . . 16
20. Percent rating self *Above Average* in skills and abilities by year . . . 18
21. Percent rating self *Above Average* (Intellectual self-confidence) by gender . . . 20
22. Percent rating self *Above Average* (Academic ability) by gender . . . 20
23. Percent rating self *Above Average* (Emotional health) by gender . . . 20
24. Percent rating self *Above Average* (Physical health) by gender . . . 20
25. Percent rating self *Above Average* (Self-understanding) by gender . . . 21
26. Percent rating self *Above Average* (Understanding of others) by gender . . . 21
27. Percent rating self *Above Average* (Computer skills) by gender . . . 21
28. Percent rating self *Above Average* (Public speaking ability) by gender . . . 21
29. Highest degree planned by year . . . 22
30. Percent choosing item as essential by year (Success and recognition) . . . 23
31. Percent choosing item as essential by year (Community action) . . . 23
32. Percent selecting by year (My major not offered) . . . 24
33. Percent selecting by year (Rules and regulations too strict . . . 25
34. Percent selecting re-enrollment options by year . . . 25

Tables

1. Percent of upper-class papers by criteria and rating . . . 2
2. Written communication rating by item . . . 2
3. Percent passing the NWC Editing Competency Exam by term and year . . . 3
4. Mean scores: PRCA speech anxiety scale . . . 4
5. Percent of upper-class presentations by criteria and rating . . . 5
6. Oral Communication rating by item . . . 5
7. Mean scores: Satisfaction with campus spiritual life items by year . . . 7
8. Mean score and percent for faith commitment items . . . 8
9. Mean score and percent for integration of faith and learning items . . . 8
10. Percent viewing college experiences as *Satisfactory* or *Very Satisfactory* . . . 11
11. Percent who were *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with campus services and opportunities . . . 13
12. Mean score: student satisfaction with campus climate by group . . . 14
13. Mean score and percentage agreement with attainment of College mission goals . . . 17
14. Percent rating self *Above Average* in ability or characteristic . . . 19
15. Percent rating item as *Very Important* or *Essential* . . . 22
16. Percent selecting item as a *Major* or *Minor Reason* for exiting . . . 24

Educational Outcomes

Written Communication

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

Senior perception of increased writing skills dropped slightly in 2004

Seniors graduating from NWC were asked to complete the ***HERI College Student Survey*** **[CSS]**. On this survey nearly twenty-eight percent of NWC seniors reported that their writing skills were *Much Stronger* after four years of college. These results were somewhat lower than those reported by the National Private College sample (33.8 percent), the CCCU sample (30.3 percent) and the percentage reported in the last administration of the **CSS** in 2002 (Charts 1and 2).

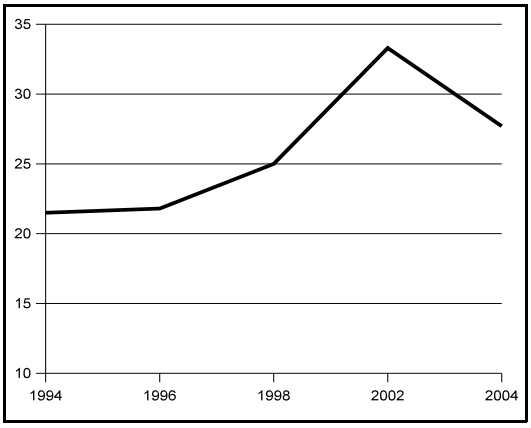

Chart 1. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* writing skills by year

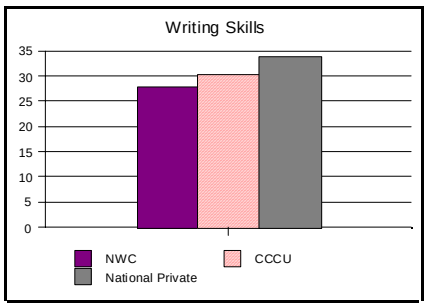

Chart 2. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* by group

The percentage of seniors who rated themselves *Above Average* was lower than the sample groups (Chart 3).

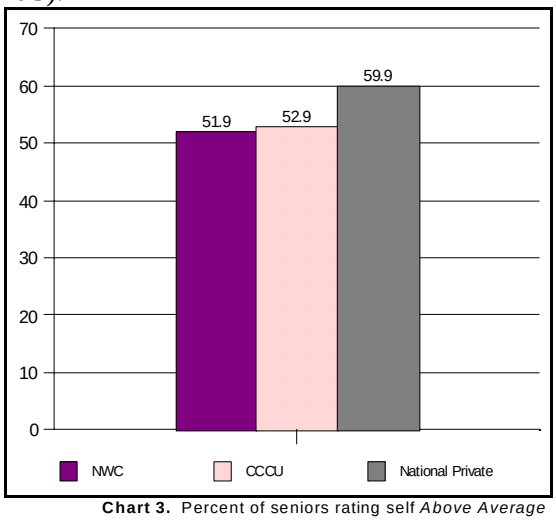

Chart 3. Percent of seniors rating self *Above Average*

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

Writing sample scores in WCE courses reached benchmarks for success in all criteria categories.

NWC instructors teaching upper-level courses designated as having a Written Communication Emphasis [WCE] evaluated the writing samples of their students in four focus areas: content, style, mechanics, and documentation. Table 1 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 reached for all areas. Table 2 shows the rating for each item of the criteria evaluated.

Criteria	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Content	67.2	28.7	4.1
Style	73.7	23.7	2.6
Mechanics	70.7	24.2	5.0
Documentation	60.1	29.4	10.6

Table 1. Percent of upper-class papers by criteria and rating

Content	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Correct genre for the assignment	73.2	23.4	8.0
Clear thesis or controlling idea(s)	67.2	28.5	4.3
Major components of composition clear and related to thesis or controlling idea(s)	68.8	26.5	4.7
Specific, accurate evidence or relevant, effective details	63.0	33.2	3.8
Coherent sequence and transitions between points	65.1	30.7	4.2
Coherent sequence and transitions between points	67.2	28.7	4.1
Style			
Appropriate word choice for the audience	76.6	22.1	1.3
Appropriate degree of sentence complexity for assignment	78.0	19.0	2.9
Appropriate degree of sentence length for the assignment	79.6	19.4	1.0
Appropriate degree of sentence variety for the assignment	76.4	20.7	3.0
Appropriate degree of clarity for the assignment	66.8	28.5	4.7
Mechanics			
Correct spelling	74.5	22.1	3.4
Proper use of commonly confused words	76.5	20.5	3.0
Suitable punctuation	68.1	26.8	5.1
Grammatically acceptable usage	64.3	27.2	8.5

Documentation	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Sufficient documentation	63.4	29.8	6.8
Correct documentation	56.2	30.9	12.9

Table 2. Written communication rating by item

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

All students completing *ENG1105 College Composition* and *ENG1825 Honors College Composition* courses are required to take the NWC ***Editing Competency Exam (ECE)*** 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 ***ECE*** on the first attempt was reached for both semesters in 2003-04 (Table 3).

Item analysis of questions on the ***ECE*** provides instructors with valuable information regarding students' specific as well as overall understanding of writing mechanics and grammatical usage.

Course	1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003		2003-04	
	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S	F	S
ENG1105	71.2	79.5	84.3	68.1	82.5	82.2	90.3	88	85.5	84.4
ENG1825	92	95.7	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	93.3

Table 3. Percent 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.

Speech anxiety decreased significantly for students completing required speech course

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

There was a statistically significant (p> .01) 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 show levels of anxiety. The lower the score, the less reported anxiety (Table 4).

Category of Communication	Pre N=208	Post N=188
Group Discussions	2.42	1.97
Meetings	2.42	2.13
Conversation	2.25	2.11
Public Speaking	2.98	2.75
Total - Mean Score	2.54	2.25

Table 4. Mean scores: PRCA speech anxiety scale

Seniors' self-rating of speaking skill improvement similar to seniors at other institutions

Nearly thirty percent of seniors reported on the ***College Student Survey*** that their public speaking skills were *Much Stronger* after four years at NWC. These results are similar to those reported for the National Private College and the CCCU samples (Chart 4).

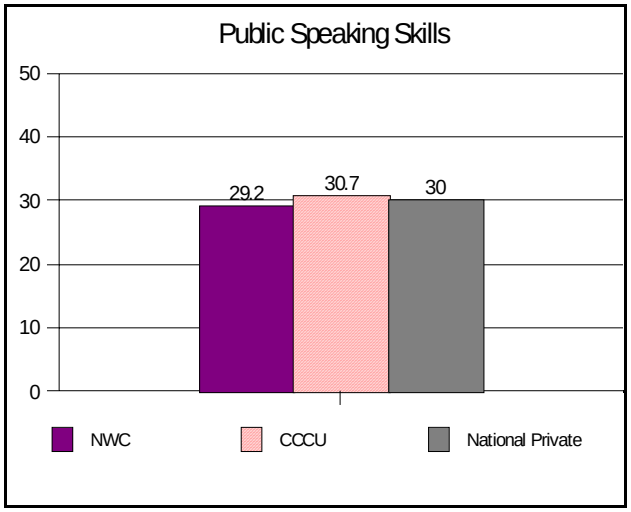

Chart 4. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* speaking skills

Professors evaluate upper-level oral communication skills

NWC instructors teaching courses designated as having an Oral Communication Emphasis [OCE] evaluated the oral skills of students based on four criteria. Each criteria included several items developed to evaluate the ability to communicate effectively. Table 5 shows the percentage of oral presentations judged to be either *Strong*, *Adequate* or *Weak* on the four criteria: Thesis/Purpose, Organization, Support Material and Delivery. A goal of 60 percent *Strong* was set for each criteria, and was met for three of the four criteria.

Criteria	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Thesis/Purpose	75.9	22.0	2.1
Organization	64.3	30.4	5.4
Support Material	72.6	23.8	3.6
Delivery	46.3	45.3	8.4

Table 5. Percent of upper-class presentations by criteria and rating

Thesis/Purpose	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Message is appropriate to the audience	73.8	23.8	2.4
Purpose/thesis is clearly presented	78.2	20.0	1.8
Organization			
Ideas are clear, logical and effectively arranged	67.3	24.4	8.3
Includes relevant introduction and conclusion	60.8	36.7	2.4
Support Material			
Specific, credible, relevant sources used as appropriate	72.6	23.8	3.6
Delivery			
Manner is confident	41.4	51.5	7.1
Body language is appropriate (i.e., gestures, movements)	37.5	49.4	13.1
Makes visual connections	53.0	36.9	10.1
Use of voice is effective (voice inflections such as tone, cadence, rate, etc. are appropriate)	52.4	44.0	3.6

Table 6. Oral communication rating by item

Professors rated speakers in OCE courses highest on thesis presentation and lowest on body language.

Other general education outcomes

Seniors were asked on the ***College Student Survey*** to report how they perceived their abilities and skills to have improved since entering college. Chart 5 below shows the percentage of seniors who reported their abilities and skills were *Much Stronger* after the four years at Northwestern. Results are also compared with those reported by seniors in the National Private College and CCCU samples.

NWC seniors report "Much Stronger" knowledge of their major field and religious beliefs after four years of college.

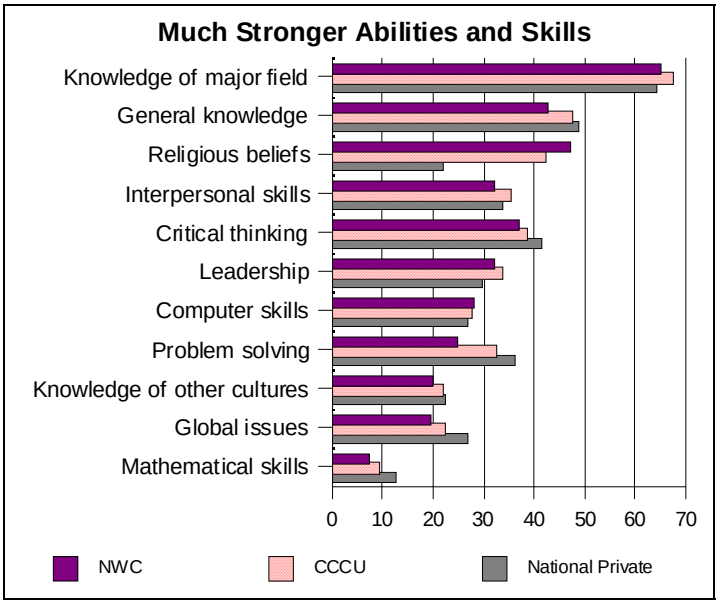

Chart 5. Percent reporting *Much Stronger* abilities and skills by group

GRE scores remain above benchmarks

Mean percentile scores on the ***Graduate Record Examinations (GRE***) achieved by Northwestern graduates reached the goal of 50th percentile or above for each of the three areas. Quantitative scores and Analytical scores increased slightly over 2003 scores, while Verbal scores decreased slightly (Chart 6).

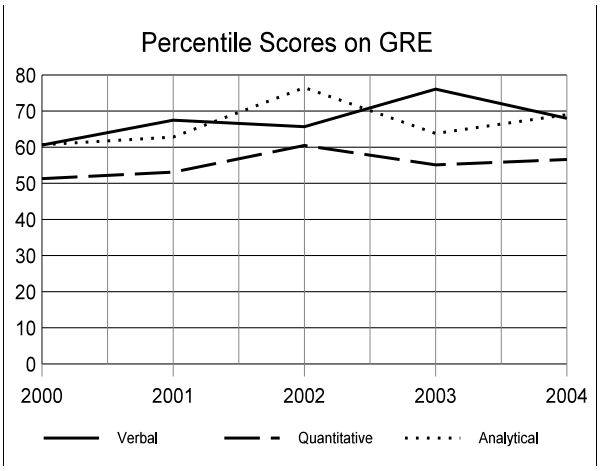

Chart 6. GRE Percentile scores by year

Spiritual and Ethical Outcomes

Objectives: Northwestern College graduate will demonstrate:

A practical and purposeful knowledge and understanding of the Word of God.
The ability to use Bible study methodologies effectively.
Knowledge of a Biblical-theological system that serves as a core for a world and life view.
Knowledge of the principles of Christian life and service.
Knowledge of ethical principles based on God's written revelation.

Satisfaction with campus spiritual life remains high

As part of the CCCU Comprehensive Assessment Program, students completing the ***Student Satisfaction Inventory*** were also asked supplementary questions rating their agreement with items related to spiritual life on campus. Northwestern College students' responses are compared in Table 7 with those of previous years and with students in the CCCU sample. Mean scores for all items were higher than those obtained from the CCCU sample.

	2004	CCCU	2002	2000	1998	1997
My understanding of God is being strengthened here	6.02	5.66	6.14	6.17	5.98	6.15
NWC contributes to spiritual growth	5.87	5.57	5.99	5.96	5.80	5.80
NWC is a good spiritual fit for me	5.78	5.58	5.98	5.86	5.70	5.93
Faculty, staff are helpful in processing faith	5.57	5.43	5.87	5.67	5.65	5.83

Table 7. Mean scores: Satisfaction with campus spiritual life items by year

1=Not at all satisfied - 7= Very satisfied

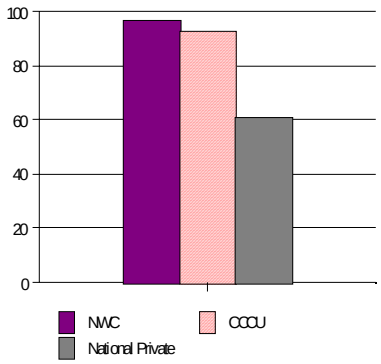

Chart 7. Percent viewing "spirituality" an essential value

Northwestern seniors agree on importance of integrating spirituality into their lives

Seniors completing the ***College Student Survey*** were asked whether they considered a series of values in terms of importance. Significantly more Northwestern seniors reported that integrating spirituality into their lives was *Very Important* or *Essential* than did seniors in the National Private or CCCU samples (Chart 7).

Seniors report strong faith commitment

Supplementary questions added to the ***College Student Survey*** **(CSS)** probed seniors' agreement with items related to faith commitment. Over ninety percent of Northwestern seniors agreed that they had a personal meaningful relationship with God that impacted their daily life and would hold fast to their faith if opposed. There was less agreement with openness to considering new insights and truths about their faith (Table 8) .

	Mean	% SA	% A	% D	% SD
My relationship with God contributes to my sense of well-being.	3.81	82.9	14.7	2.3	0
I have a personally meaningful relationship with God.	3.80	81.3	17.2	1.6	0
Even if the people around me were opposed to my Christian convictions, I would still hold fast to them.	3.73	74.7	24.1	1.2	0
The way I do things from day to day is often affected by my relationship with God.	3.64	67.8	28.7	3.5	0
I feel like I need to be open to consider new insights and truths about my faith.	3.31	38.2	55.5	6.3	0

Table 8. Mean score and percent for faith commitment items

1=Strongly Disagree - 4 = Strongly Agree

Seniors report that integration of faith with learning is a component of their education at NWC

Other supplementary questions probed seniors' agreement with statements related to integration of faith and learning during courses taken at Northwestern. Seniors were in agreement that courses were taught from a Christian perspective, that faculty related the Christian faith to their major, and to a slightly lessor extent, that they felt prepared to analyze contemporary issues from a biblical perspective.

	Mean	% SA	% A	% D	% SD
Courses consistently were taught from the perspective of a Christian worldview	3.50	52.7	44.6	2.3	.4
Faculty in my major frequently related the Christian faith to the course and the academic major.	3.47	52.2	43.0	3.5	1.2
NWC has helped prepared me to analyze contemporary issues from a biblical perspective	3.27	38.4	52.7	8.1	.8

Table 9. Mean score and percent for integration of faith and learning items

1=Strongly Disagree - 4 = Strongly Agree

Senior ratings of spiritual life experiences on campus declined in 2004

Each year seniors have been asked to rate their satisfaction with experiences related to spiritual life on campus. The percentage of graduating seniors reporting on the ***CSS*** that they were *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with the **College's spiritual climate** declined in 2004. Expressed satisfaction with **chapel experiences** and **other spiritual life experiences on campus** was also lower than responses given in previous years (Chart 8).

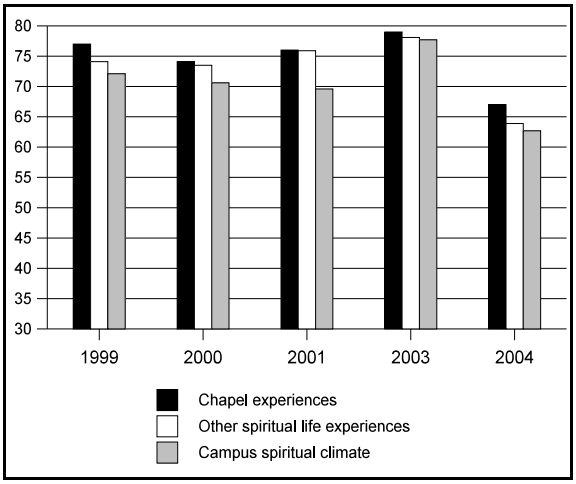

Chart 8. Percent reporting satisfaction with campus spiritual life

Seniors report consistent engagement in spiritual disciplines

Seniors were also asked their level of engagement with spiritual disciplines. Nearly all graduating seniors reported they **attend religious services**, **maintain personal daily devotions, share their faith with others,** and **meet in small group for prayer and Bible study** (Chart 9).

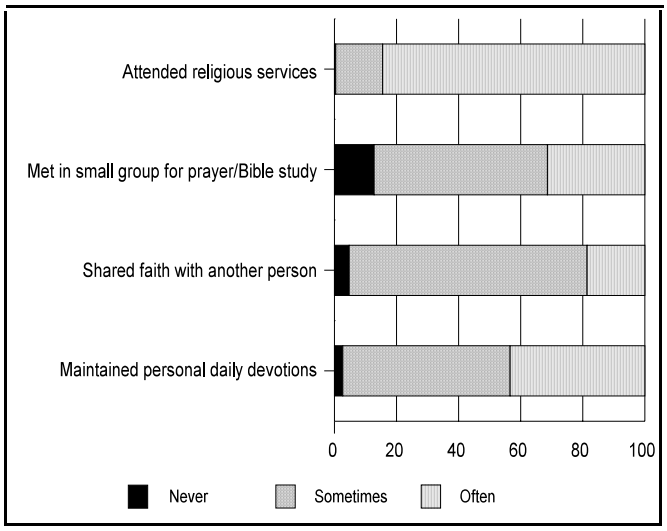

Chart 9. Reported engagement in spiritual disciplines

Freshmen indicate strong interest in missions

On the ***FYI Evaluation Survey*** given during the Freshmen Seminar, all freshmen were asked whether they planned to participate in a missions trip while at Northwestern. Over 80 percent responded positively. This percentage is similar to the responses of freshmen in previous years (Chart 10).

Over 84 percent of freshmen reported they intend to participate in a missions trip while at Northwestern.

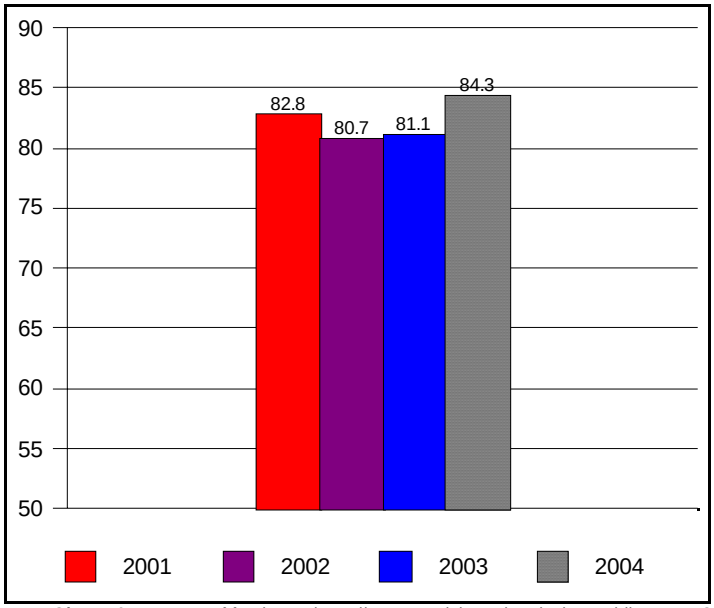

Chart 10. Percent of freshmen intending to participate in missions while at NWC

Satisfaction with Academic Life

Senior satisfaction with instruction remains high

As in previous years, seniors have been asked to rate their satisfaction with instruction at Northwestern. The percentage of seniors reporting they are *Very Satisfied* or *Satisfied* with the **overall quality of instruction** has remained near 90 percent each year. The percentage reporting satisfaction with **instruction in the major field** was again over the goal of 85 percent (Chart 11).

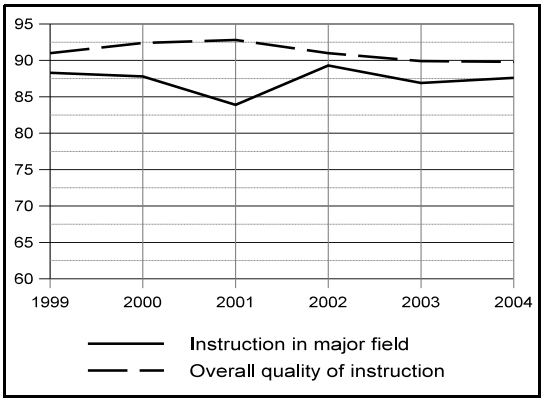

Chart 11. Percent reporting satisfaction with instruction by year

The percentage of seniors reporting satisfaction with instruction has consistently been near 90 percent.

Seniors report satisfaction with the academic experience at Northwestern

The percentage of seniors reporting they were *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with a variety of aspects of the college experience is shown on Table 10. The 2004 CCCU sample responses are also reported.

	NWC 2004	NWC 2002	NWC 1998	CCCU 2004
Class size	89.1	92.2	89.4	90.5
Overall quality of instruction	89.8	91.0	89.3	87.3
Amount of contact with faculty	85.0	91.0	89.8	86.2
Courses in major field	87.6	89.3	90.6	89.8
General education/core curriculum	81.5	85.7	NA	77.8
Relevance of course work to life	78.3	79.2	78.4	73.8
Ability to find faculty/staff mentor	74.4	76.8	82.6	78.9
Academic advising	66.4	63.9	73.0	65.0

Table 10. Percent viewing college experiences as *Satisfactory* or *Very Satisfactory*

Senior satisfaction with instruction in comparison to other sample groups

In 2004, a slightly higher percentage of NWC seniors reported satisfaction with **overall instruction** than did seniors in the CCCU and National Private College samples.

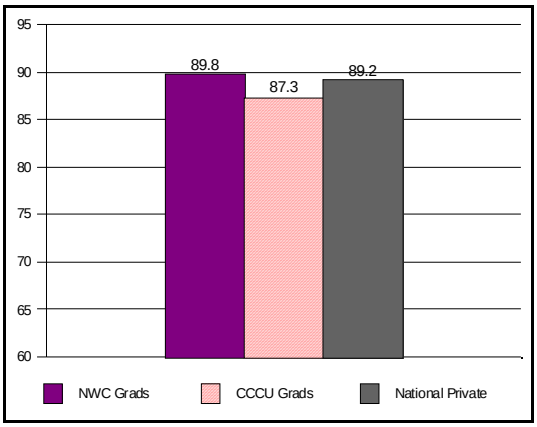

Chart 12. Percent satisfaction with instruction by group

On general, NWC student satisfaction scores on items related to instruction are higher then the National Private College and CCCU samples.

NWC student satisfaction with academic life met benchmarks

Students completing the ***Student Satisfaction Inventory*** reported higher satisfaction with faculty and instruction than did students in the National Private College and CCCU samples. On the seven point scale, the benchmark goal of 5.50 was achieved for all items.

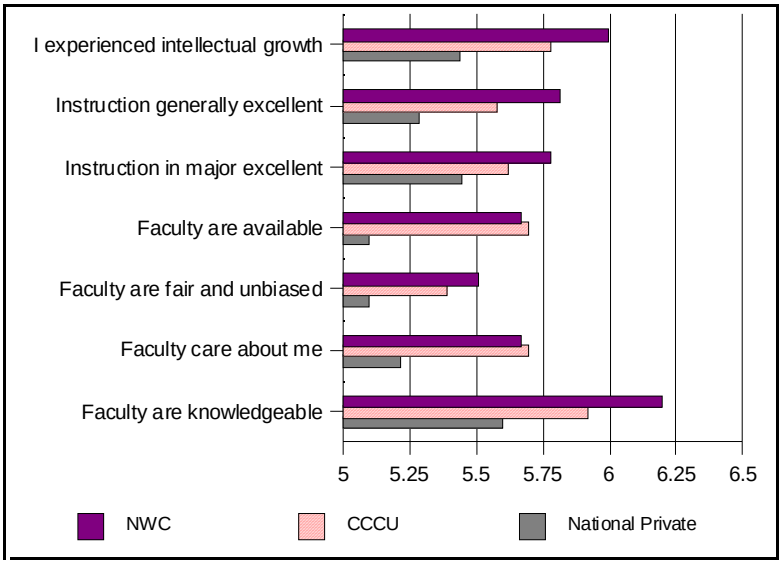

Chart 13. Percent satisfaction with instructional characteristics by group

1=Definitely Not Satisfied - 7 = Very Satisfied

Satisfaction with Campus Life

Seniors report satisfaction with most campus services and facilities

On the ***College Student Survey***, seniors were asked to rate their satisfaction with campus services and facilities. When compared with seniors in the National Private College and CCCU samples , a higher percentage of NWC seniors reported they were satisfied with campus services and campus facilities.

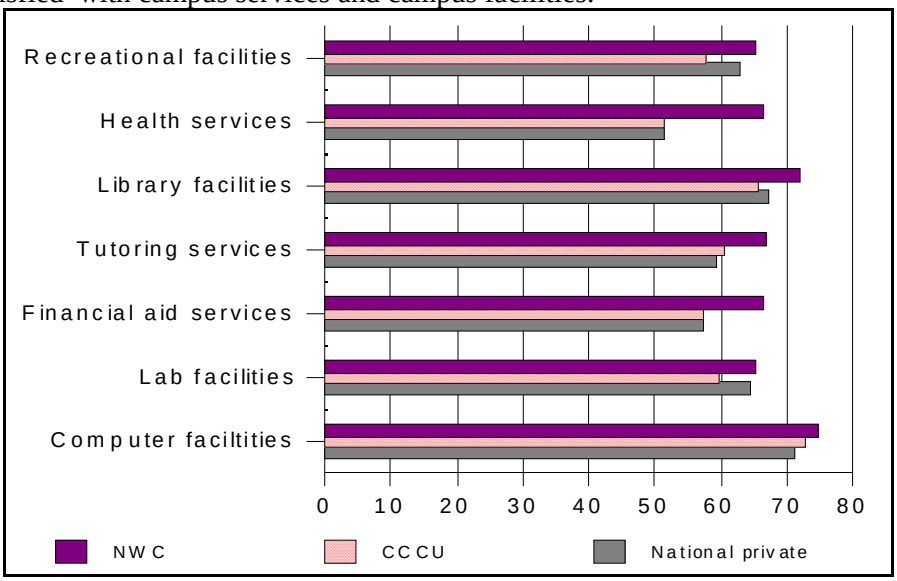

Chart 14. Percent satisfaction with campus services

Comparison with previous years

Items asking seniors to rate their satisfaction with campus services and opportunities have been included in senior surveys for several years. Responses were fairly typical in 2004, however satisfaction with **food service** and **career services** declined somewhat from 2003 levels (Table 11).

	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
Attitudes of staff towards students	90.7	88.9	NA	88.4	92.1	90.7
Service/volunteer opportunities	78.6	78.2	73.4	76.4	79.0	53.1
Campus health services	66.1	77.3	72.3	79.6	77.2	68.7
Leadership opportunities	73.7	74.4	72.3	72.9	76.4	72.4
Food service	46.9	69.2	NA	NA	NA	79.5
Career services	46.6	64.9	46.8	NA	NA	53.5

Table 11. Percent *Satisfied* or *Very Satisfied* with campus services and opportunities

NA = Item not included in survey.

Student body expresses satisfaction with campus life and living conditions

Students taking the ***Student Satisfaction Inventory*** rated their satisfaction with items related to campus life on a seven point scale from *1=Not at all satisfied - 7 Very Satisfied.* Results reported in Chart 14 compare NWC students responses with those of students in the National Private College and CCCU samples.

NWC Student satisfaction with living conditions was significantly higher than the National Private College and CCCU samples.

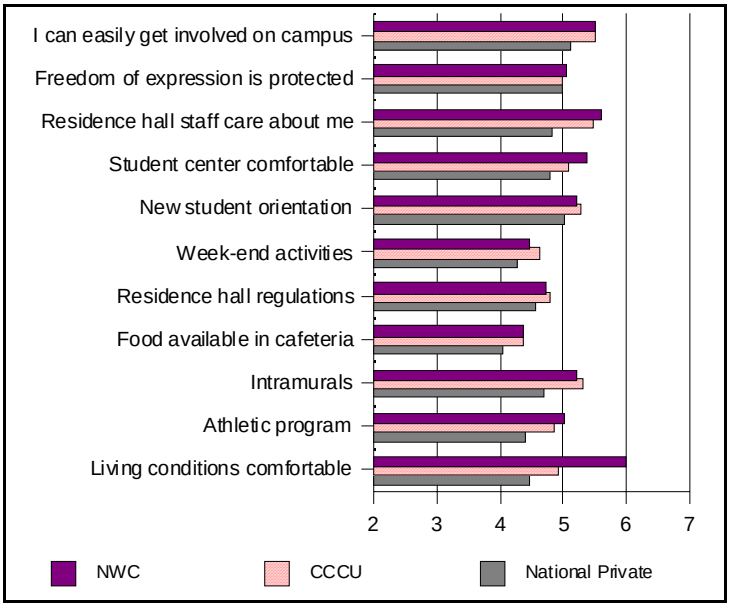

Chart 15. Student satisfaction with campus life by group

Campus climate and environment

Scores on the ***SSI*** rating agreement with items related to the college climate and environment are reported in Table 12. Scores for most items were higher than those obtained from the CCCU and the National Private College samples.

	NWC	CCCU	National Private
This institution has a good reputation in the community	6.32	5.84	5.52
It is an enjoyable experience to be a student here	6.06	5.67	5.18
The campus staff are caring and helpful	5.90	5.75	5.30
This institution shows concern for students	5.84	5.61	5.08
I feel a sense of pride about my campus	5.80	5.38	4.97
Most students feel a sense of belonging here	5.52	5.39	5.06
Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment	4.93	4.95	4.67

Table 12. Mean score: Student satisfaction with campus climate by group

1=Strongly Disagree - 7=Strongly Agree

Overall Satisfaction

Overall senior 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 of NWC students who indicates they were *Very Satisfied* or *Satisfied* with their overall college experience has consistently been above or near 90 percent since 1996 (Chart 16).

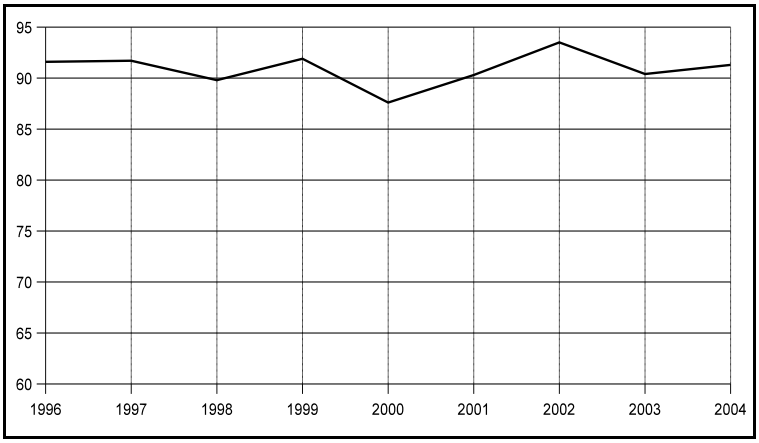

Chart 16. Percent satisfied with overall college experience

Over 85 percent of 2004 graduates reported they would enroll again at Northwestern if they had the choice.

Large majority of seniors would enroll at NWC again

When asked on the ***College Student Survey*** if they would enroll at Northwestern College again it they had the choice, 85.7 percent reported responded positively (Chart 17).

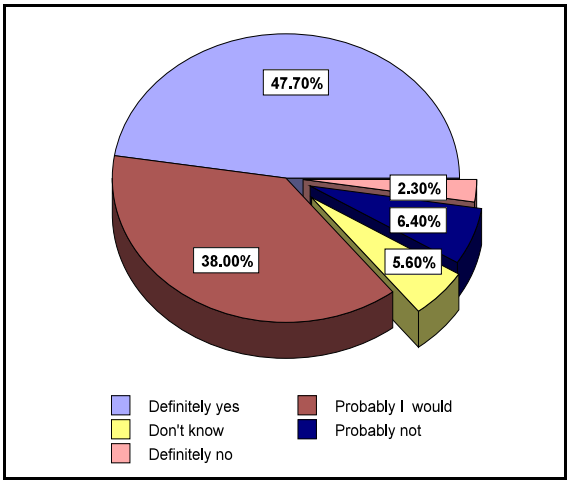

Chart 17. Percent responses to "enroll again" item

Students express satisfaction with their experiences at Northwestern

NWC students completing the ***Student Satisfaction Inventory*** were asked to rate their "overall satisfaction with your experience at NWC thus far." Northwestern students' satisfaction ratings were higher than the National Private college sample and the CCCU sample (Chart 18).

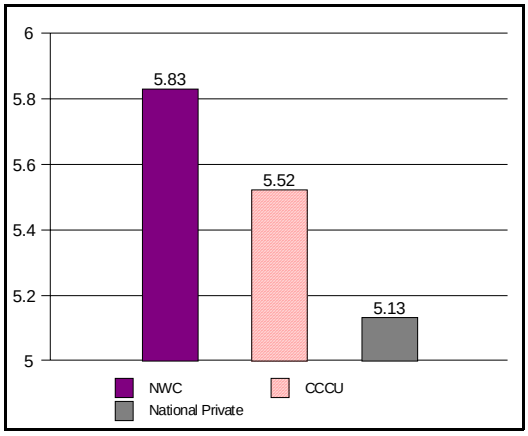

Chart 18. Mean score: Overall satisfaction by group

1= Not at all satisfied - 7 = Very Satisfied

Northwestern students rated their satisfaction with the overall college experience higher than did students in other samples.

Northwestern students were also asked "All in all, if you had to do it over, would you enroll at NWC again?" A higher percentage of Northwestern students responded they would enroll again than did students in the other samples (Chart 19).

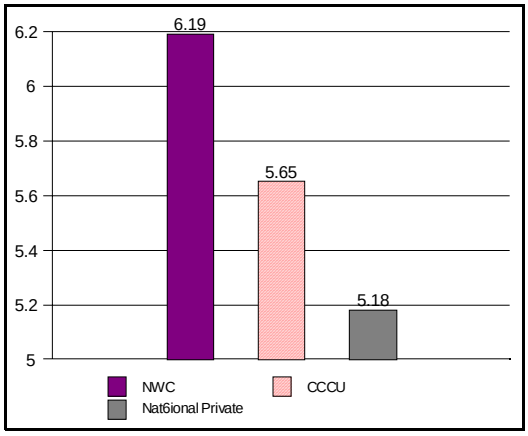

Chart 19. Mean score: Satisfaction with college choice by group

1= Definitely Not - 7 = Definitely Yes

Senior perceptions of college mission outcomes

Northwestern College Mission Statement
Northwestern College exists to provide Christ-centered higher education equipping students to grow intellectually and spiritually, to serve effectively in their professions, and to give God-honoring leadership in the home, church, community and world.

On the ***College Student Survey***, four supplementary questions were added asking seniors to indicate whether they felt their preparation at Northwestern had met the goals outlined in the College Mission Statement. Results suggest that in the view of most seniors, their preparation at Northwestern is aligned with the outcomes described in the College Mission Statement.

	Mean	% SA	% A	% D	% SD
NWC has prepared me to serve effectively in my profession.	3.24	39.3	49.4	9.7	1.6
NWC has prepared me to provide God-honoring leadership in my home.	3.38	43.7	49.2	7.0	0
NWC has prepared me to provide God-honoring leadership in my church.	3.28	35.7	54.1	9.4	.8
NWC has prepared me to provide God-honoring leadership in my community and neighborhood.	3.24	33.6	57.4	8.6	.4

Table 13. Mean score and percent agreement with attainment of college mission goals

2004 SENIORS

Freshmen to Senior Year Changes

Longitudinal data collection process

All incoming freshmen in 2000 were asked to complete the Higher Education Research Institution ***Student Information form***. On this survey the freshmen reported future plans, essential values, and self-ratings of skills and abilities. Seniors in 2004 were asked to complete the ***HERI College Student Survey(CSS)*** which included the same questions. Results were obtained from students who had completed the survey in 2000 as freshmen and did so again in 2004 as seniors. These results were important evidence of how values and perceptions changed for these students from their freshmen to their senior years. Of the 359 freshman who completed the ***Student Information Form*** in 2000, 131 persisted to their senior year and completed the ***College Student Survey*** in 2004.

Reported changes from freshmen to senior years

Freshmen in 2000 were asked to indicate whether they thought they were *Above Average* in 20 areas. These same individuals were asked to rate themselves again as seniors in 2004. Increases of more than ten percent from freshmen to senior year in perceived abilities were found in the areas of **Self-understanding**, **Computer skills**, **Social self-confidence**, **Understanding of others**, and **Initiative** (Chart 20).

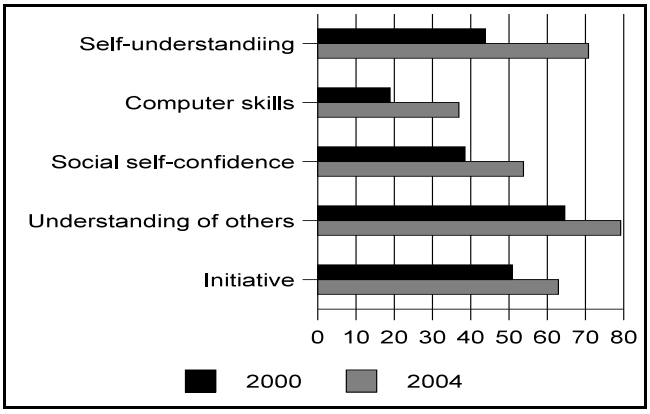

Chart 20. Percent rating self *Above Average* in skills and abilities by year

Skills, abilities and characteristics

For the twenty skills, abilities and characteristics on which students rated themselves as freshmen and as seniors, self-ratings increased for fourteen, decreased for five and remained the same for one from the freshmen to senior years (Table 14).

	As Freshmen in 2000	As Seniors in 2004	Total Change
Academic ability	73.1	67.7	-5.4
Artistic ability	40.0	32.3	-7.7
Competitiveness	35.7	39.7	+4.0
Cooperativeness	74.6	78.5	+3.9
Creativity	53.1	60.0	+6.9
Drive to achieve	66.9	66.2	-0.7
Emotional health	51.5	60.0	+8.5
Initiative	50.9	62.9	+12.0
Leadership ability	63.8	63.8	0.0
Mathematical ability	35.7	27.1	-8.6
Physical health	45.4	46.9	+1.5
Popularity	24.6	26.9	+2.3
Public speaking	33.8	39.2	+5.4
Self-confidence(intellectual)	43.1	50.8	+7.7
Self-confidence (social)	38.5	53.8	+15.3
Self-understanding	43.8	70.8	+27.0
Understanding of others	64.6	79.2	+14.6
Spirituality	72.4	79.5	+7.1
Writing ability	56.2	52.3	-3.9

Table 14. Percent rating self *Above Average* in ability or characteristic

Greatest self-perceived changes after four years of college were in Self-understanding and Social self-confidence.

Gender differences

Intellectual self-confidence and academic ability

Freshmen women entered Northwestern with lower self-ratings of **Intellectual self-confidence** than male freshmen. By their senior year, self-ratings were nearly identical for this trait (Chart 21). Both male and female self-ratings of **Academic ability** declined slightly from the freshmen to senior years (Chart 22).

Females' perception of their emotional and physical health increased after four years of college. Males' perceptions of health showed little change.

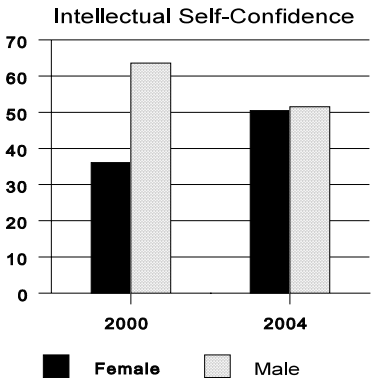

Chart 21. Percent rating self *Above Average*.

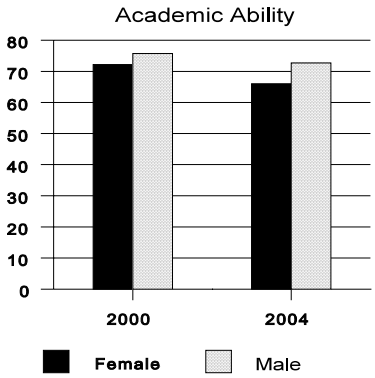

Chart 22. Percent rating self *Above Average*

Physical and emotional health

In 2000, female freshman rated their **Emotional** and **Physical health** lower than did the males. The percentage of females who rated themselves as *Above Average* increased by 12.4 in **Emotional health** and 2.0 percent in **Physical health** from their freshmen to senior years (Chart 23). Males rated their **Emotional health** slightly lower after four years with no change in perceived **Physical health** (Chart 24).

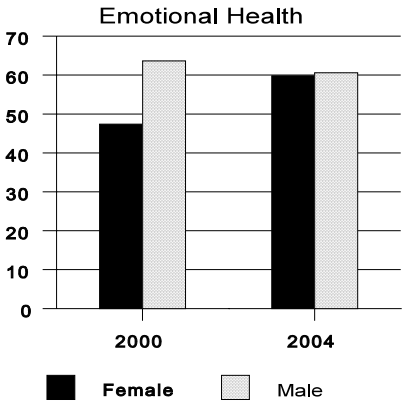

Chart 23. Percent rating self *Above Average*

Chart 24. Percent rating self *Above Average*

Understanding of self and others

After four years of college, a higher percentage of both males and females rated their **Understanding of self** as *Above Average* (Chart 25.) The percentage of males who rated their **Understanding of others** as *Above Average* decreased while the percentage of females who rated themselves *Above Average* after four years increased (Chart 26).

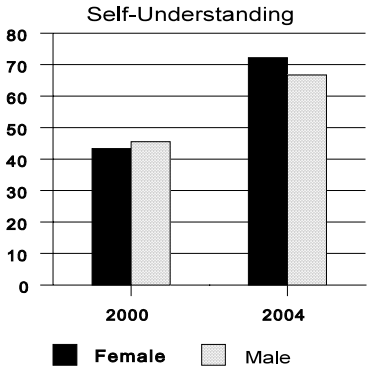

Chart 25. Percent rating self *Above Average*

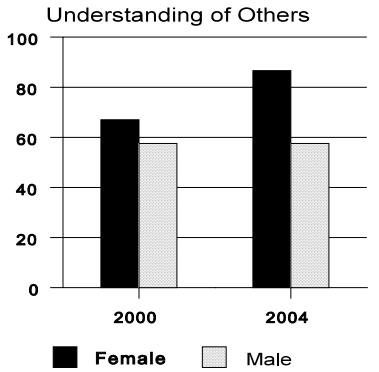

Chart 26. Percent rating self *Above Average*

Self-rating of public speaking ability increased for females after four years of college but decreased for males.

Other skills

Female perceptions of their **Computer skills** and **Public speaking skills** increased over four years, while there was no change in male perception of their **Computer skills** and self-ratings of their **Public speaking ability** decreased (Charts 27 and 28).

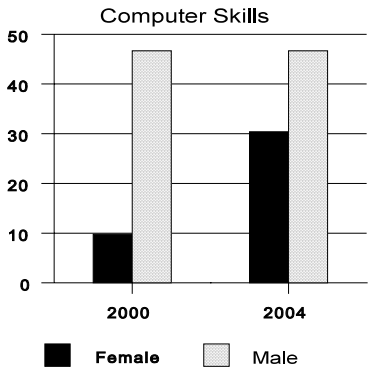

Chart 27. Percent rating self *Above Average*

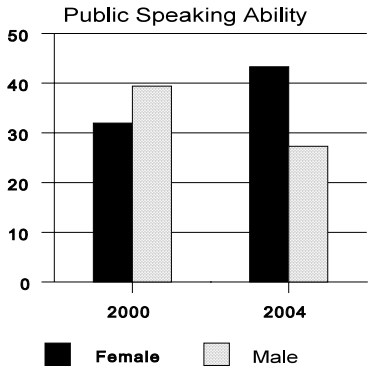

Chart 28. Percent rating self *Above Average*

Academic ambitions

When asked in 2000, 74 percent of freshmen indicated they aspired to achieve an advanced degree, with nearly a third indicating they intended to complete a doctoral degree. As seniors the number intending to complete a graduate program increased to 79.7 percent, however the percentage indicating they plan to complete a doctoral program declined over10 percent (Chart 29).

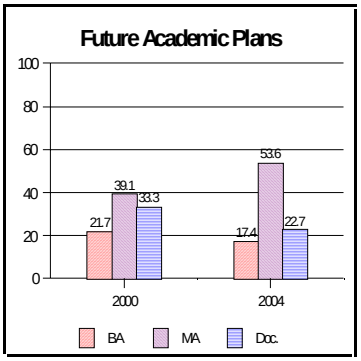

Chart 29. Highest degree planned

Essential values

Persisting students were asked as freshmen and again as seniors to rate the importance of a number of value items. The most essential values remained the same from freshmen to senior years, however the percentage who reported that **helping others in difficulty** and **developing a meaningful philosophy of life** were essential increased by more than ten percent.

	As Freshmen in 2000	As Seniors in 2004	Change
Integrate spirituality into my life	95.8	99.2	+3.4
Raise a family	87.5	86.7	-0.8
Help others in difficulty	75.8	86.7	+10.9
Develop a meaningful philosophy of life	48.4	61.1	+12.7
Influence social values	60.9	53.1	-7.8
Become authority in own field	41.3	44.4	+3.1
Keep up to date with politics	24.4	32.3	+7.9
Promote racial understanding	25.2	29.9	+4.7
Obtain recognition from colleagues	25.2	29.1	+3.9
Become a community leader	34.6	28.3	-6.3
Participate in community action	32.8	25.0	-7.8
Have administrative responsibility	15.0	23.6	+8.6
Write original works	14.1	21.1	+7.0
Create artistic work	18.7	19.5	+0.8
Be very well off financially	28.9	15.6	-13.3
Be successful in own business	21.1	14.8	-6.3
Achieve in a performing art	16.5	14.2	-2.3
Influence political structure	11.8	13.4	+1.6
Be involved in environmental cleanup	7.0	4.7	-2.3

Table 15. Percent rating item as *Very Important* or *Essential*

Material success and personal recognition

The importance of **being well-off financially** decreased substantially as an essential value for these students from their freshmen to their senior year. The importance of becoming an **authority in one's field** increased slightly as did the importance of **obtaining recognition from colleagues** (Chart 30).

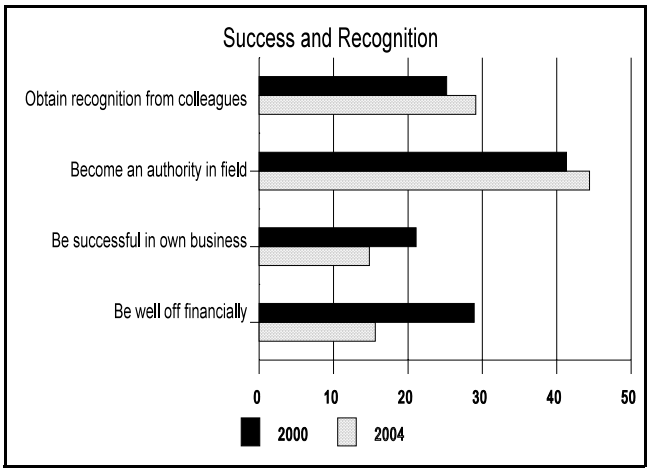

Chart 30. Percent choosing item as essential by year

The importance of being well-off financially declined from freshmen to senior years.

Community leadership and political activism

Changes were noted in the perceived importance of being involved in society and in the political process between the freshmen and senior years. There was an increase in the importance of **promoting racial understanding**, and **keeping up to date with politics**, but a decrease in the importance of **participating in community action**, **becoming a community leader, influencing social values**, **influencing the political structure**, and **being involved in environmental cleanup** (Chart 31).

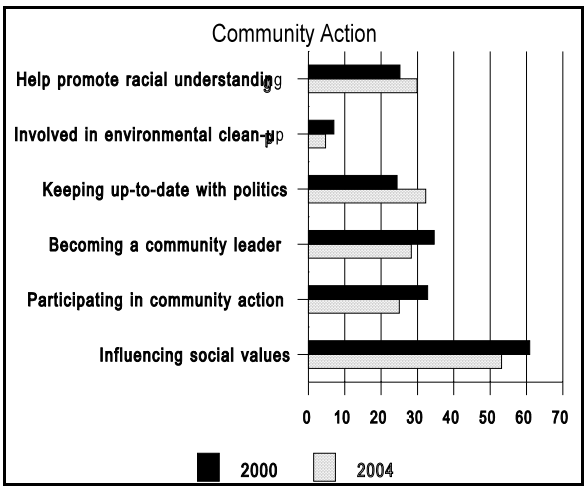

Chart 31. Percent choosing item as *essential* value by year

EXITING STUDENTS

What do they tell us?

All full-time students voluntarily leaving Northwestern are asked to complete the ***Northwestern Exiting Survey*** soliciting their reasons for choosing to leave Northwestern. On the survey, exiting students were asked to indicate whether each item was a *Major Reason*, a *Minor Reason*, or *Not a Reason* for leaving. Exiting students are also asked their purpose for attending NWC and plans for re-enrolling.

Factors contributing to the decision to leave

	MAJOR Reason	MINOR Reason	TOTAL N=150
	%	%	%
Transferring to a college where costs are less	20.7	24.7	53.3
Ability to pay fell short of expenses	22.0	20.7	42.7
Could not make it with limited financial aid	20.7	16.0	36.7
My major not offered	28.0	8.0	36.0
College rules and regulations too strict	12.7	23.3	36.0
NWC not a good "fit" for me	18.0	14.7	32.7
Wanted a break from college	14.0	9.3	23.3
Uncertain about major	10.7	12.0	22.7
Moved to a new location	14.0	7.3	21.3
Did not do as well as hoped	6.0	13.3	19.3
Dissatisfied with quality of advising	5.3	14.0	19.3
Encountered unexpected expenses	6.0	12.7	18.7
Felt alone or isolated	5.3	12.0	17.3
Dissatisfied with quality of instruction	6.0	10.0	16.0
Desired major offered but content unsatisfactory	4.0	10.0	14.0
Required to leave because of family issues	6.7	6.0	12.7
Unhappy with quality of campus social activities	4.0	8.7	12.7
My poor academic effort did not merit the expense	2.7	8.7	11.3
Unhappy with college housing	5.3	6.0	11.3
Health related problems	10	.1	10.7
Courses too difficult	2	6.7	8.7
Problem with scheduling classes	3.3	5.3	8.7
Unhappy with on-campus spiritual growth activities	2.7	5.3	8.0
Courses not challenging	1.3	6.0	7.3
Unhappy with campus services	3.3	4.0	7.3
Not academically prepared for college work	.7	2.0	2.7

Table 16. Percent selecting items as a *Major or Minor Reason* for exiting

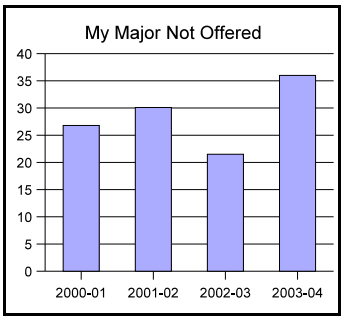

Chart 32. Percent selecting by year

Finances play large role in reported reason for leaving Northwestern

In 2003-2004, when *Major Reasons* and *Minor Reasons* for leaving were combined, more than half (53.3 percent) of exiting students reported they were **transferring to a college where costs were less** and because of **ability to pay fell short of expenses** (42.7 percent). Nearly 37 percent reported leaving because of **limited financial aid** and 18.7 percent indicated they **encountered unexpected expenses** (Table 16).

Institutional "fit" played a role in decision to leave NWC

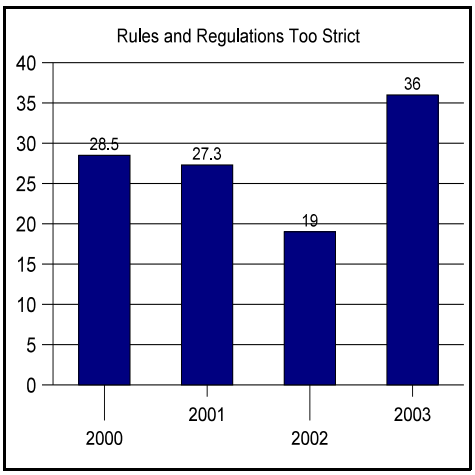

Chart 33. Percent selecting by year

Nearly a third of the exiting students selected the item **NWC not a good "fit" for me** as a reason for leaving, with 18 percent indicated it was a *Major Reason*, and 14.7 a *Minor Reason*. More than 36 percent of exiting students gave **College rules and regulations too strict** as a reason for exiting. Of this number, it was a *Major Reason* for 12.7 percent.

Only 14.7 percent of exiting students report they plan to return to Northwestern - the lowest ever.

The percentage of exiting students who plan to return was the lowest ever

The percentage of exiting students planning to return to NWC has been approximately 20-25 percent for the past several years. In 2003-2004, this percentage dropped to 14.7 percent. The percentage who were *undecided* about returning was 37.3 percent of respondents, similar to previous years (Chart 34).

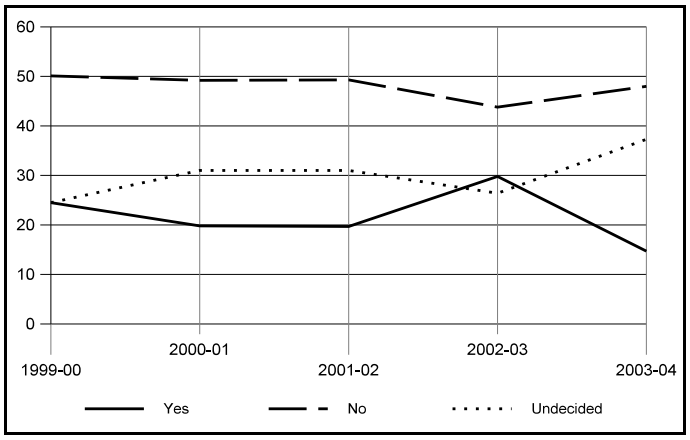

Chart 34. Percent selecting future re-enrollment options by year

2003-2004 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.