

Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2008

Research Methodology

The Evergreen Student Experience Survey is administered every two years by The Evergreen State College Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. This report describes the research methodology for the 2008 administration of the survey. More information about this and other survey administrations is available on the Institutional Research and Assessment website:

www.evergreen.edu/institutionalresearch.

The Evergreen Student Experience Survey is an integral part of Evergreen's assessment plan by incorporating questions that specifically address aspects of Evergreen's unique structure and learning environment. In addition, the survey results are a campus-wide resource for students, administrators, and faculty and include information about:

- Student satisfaction with elements of Evergreen's learning environment
- Student perception of Evergreen's contribution to their growth in various skill areas
- Student goals for the college experience
- Student level of confidence
- Student use of campus resources and participation in community activities
- Demographics not available through the administrative database (BANNER)

This survey serves as part of a larger longitudinal research effort: the Evergreen Student Experience Survey, the Evergreen New Student Survey, and the Alumni Survey were designed in parallel, are administered biennially, and contain comparable questions to assess student attitudes, perceptions and experiences at college entry, after one year of study, and one year after graduation. The data from these three surveys are used individually and in concert for assessment and informed changes to Evergreen's academic environment, improvement of student services, and institutional planning.

Sampling Method

The total sample of surveyed students consists of a random sample of Olympia degree-seeking undergraduate students, all students enrolled in off-site programs, and all completers of the Evergreen New Student Survey 2007.

A sample of 1,200 students from the Evergreen Olympia degree-seeking undergraduate population was drawn first. This sample was stratified by class standing to be proportional to class standing representation in the population. After the sample was selected and the survey administered, it was discovered that class standing was assigned incorrectly in BANNER, thus causing the percent of population by class standing to be slightly different than for the total Olympia degree-seeking population. The percentage representation by class standing is detailed in the following table.

Total number of students in Olympia undergraduate population by class standing, percent of population and total number of students in sample

	Total in population (N)	Percent of Population	Total in Sample (N)*	Percent of Sample
Freshmen	550	15%	218	18%
Sophomores	688	19%	196	16%
Juniors	1330	37%	444	37%
Seniors	1025	29%	342	29%
	3593**	100%	1200	100%

* The representation of students in the sample was to be proportional to that seen in the entire Olympia degree-seeking undergraduate population.

** Post-baccalaureate students were excluded in this research.

Students enrolled spring quarter 2008 who completed the New Student Survey 2007 and were not included in the sample were also asked to participate in the survey. Therefore, all respondents to the Evergreen New Student Survey 2007 were able to participate in the Evergreen Student Experience Survey thereby enhancing the strength of future longitudinal analyses.

All students enrolled in the Tacoma, Grays Harbor, and Tribal: Reservation-based/Community-determined (Tribal) programs during spring quarter 2008 were also asked to participate in the survey. This was to increase the possibility of having sufficient respondent numbers for more in-depth analyses and to conduct assessment specific to those programs.

The total number of undergraduates asked to participate in the Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2008 was 1,958. Seven hundred fifty-eight additional students who were not part of the random sample were surveyed:

- All Tribal students (N=19) including three non-degree students
- All Degree-seeking Tacoma students (N= 192)
- All Degree-seeking students with a campus affiliation of or studying in Grays Harbor (N=27)
- Evergreen New Student Survey 2007 respondents not selected in the initial Olympia campus sample enrolled as of 10th day (N=521), excluding one deceased student.

Methods of Contacting Students

Enrolled students were first contacted by e-mail to both the preferred e-mail address which had been reported to Evergreen and the assigned college e-mail address (evergreen.edu). The e-mails contained a brief introduction to the survey and a link to the web survey. Students who lacked valid e-mail addresses or for other reasons did not respond to the web survey were sent a copy of the survey by mail. Two reminder e-mails and a reminder letter were sent to those students who had not completed the survey.

Student Responses Rates and Methods of Response

There were 588 responses to the Evergreen Student Experience Survey, representing 15.4% of the total degree-seeking undergraduate population spring quarter. Five students were unreachable with no valid e-mail address or mailing address. Accounting for the five unreachable students, 588 out of 1953 students responded, giving an overall response rate of 30.1%. The following chart shows separate response rates for the random sample, all enrolled students in the Tacoma, Tribal, and Grays Harbor programs, and respondents to the Evergreen New Student Survey 2007.

Response Rates by Sample Types

Sample	Number of Respondents*	Number in Sample	Response Rate
Students in Random Sample	330	1195**	27.6%
Students enrolled in Tacoma Program	62	192	32.3%
Students enrolled in Grays Harbor Program	8	27	29.6%
Students enrolled in Tribal: Reservation-based/Community-determined Programs	3 [†]	19 [†]	15.8%
Students who responded to the Evergreen New Student Survey 2007 ^{††}	290	953	30.4%

* Numbers of respondents total more than 588 respondents since some students are in more than one sample.

** Does not include the five students who were not reachable.

[†]The Tribal sample included three non-degree seeking students, of whom one responded.

^{††}Excluding "Returning Greeners" enrolled in fall 2007, prior Evergreen students who had not attended the institution for at least one year.

Of the total number of students responding , 455 responded via the web (77.4% of respondents), 133 responded by mail (22.6% of respondents), and six students refused to participate in the survey.

Student Response Reports

Because of the unique learning environments of Evergreen's different locations, only a small number of data elements were analyzed using the institution-wide sample responses. Students' responses were analyzed by the type of student and location of study. Data from the following subgroup responses has been summarized and analyzed:

- Olympia campus students selected in the random sample (N=330)
- Students studying at the Tacoma campus (N=62)
- All first-time, first-year respondents who were new in Fall 2008 (N=140)
- Students who responded to both the Evergreen New Student Survey 2007 and Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2008 (N=290 first-time, first-years and transfer students)

To protect the identities of individual respondents, responses for Grays Harbor and Tribal programs were summarized in general but not analyzed further because of the low number of respondents. The number of students listed above does not add up to 657, since some students were represented in more than one group. Tests for representativeness of respondents to the population of students are reported within the separate reports listed above.

Final Notes: Explanation of Sampling Methods

The sampling method evolved from previous Evergreen Student Experience Survey sampling strategies. The original sampling method for the Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2004 included all respondents to New Student Survey 2003 in the initial sample and additional students were added to arrive at a total of 2,000 students stratified by class standing. The responses were then reported as one group, regardless of program location.

For the 2006 administration, the sampling method was revised so that the stratified random sample of 1,200 was drawn first from all degree-seeking undergraduates regardless of location, then additional students were selected to increase the strength of off-site and longitudinal analyses.

The sampling method was revised once again for the Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2008. First, a random sample of Olympia-only degree-seeking students stratified by class-standing was selected. Second, all degree-seeking students from off-site programs as well as non-degree students from the Tribal program were selected. Third, all students who completed the Evergreen New Student Survey 2007 were added to the sample. It is hoped that this new sampling method will provide better data for the Olympia campus with a dedicated random sample, enhance our ability to conduct longitudinal analyses, as well as to better serve the smaller off-site programs by surveying the entire population.