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Chose Not to Enroll: Survey Results of Nonenrolled Students Admitted to Western Washington University

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Report 1992-07: Chose Not to Enroll: Survey Results of Non-enrolled Students Admitted to Western Washington University

This report analyzes survey results from a questionnaire sent to a sample of 2,000 Fall Quarter, 1991, non-enrolled students who were accepted for admission to Western but declined to attend. Both general survey results and written results are reported.

The sample was made up mostly of single, Caucasian females aged 21 and under who had permanent residency in Washington state. Over three-quarters of respondents had been enrolled in a college prep program, and had a 3.00 or higher overall high school GPA. Two-thirds of the respondents were employed, with half working more than 21 hours a week.

The college catalog and/or brochures, visits to campus, and friends at Western were listed as the most frequent sources of information about Western. Very few people had a negative impression from any of the sources listed.

Nearly all survey respondents attended another institution during the 1991-92 academic year after declining to attend Western (93.9%). Most attended a public, 4-year college in Washington State; most attended the school of their first choice, and had made the decision to apply to that institution while in the 12th grade. The highest percentage of respondents said that academic reputation, availability of a particular program of study, and cost of attending were very important in the decision to attend their current college.

Over two-thirds of respondents agreed that Western has high-quality academic programs, and that the cost of attending Western is reasonable. Most respondents had visited the Western campus, had a positive or very positive overall impression of Western, and considered Western a high choice for attending college. Less than a quarter, however, indicated that

wanted further information about Western, or that they planned to enroll at Western in the future.

Of note was the fact that while Western was considered a high choice for survey respondents, a majority of respondents marked that they ended up attending the institution of their first choice. For many respondents attending Western might have been desirable only if their first choice was unavailable; or, they might have been shopping. In this regard, the 1991 Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Survey data (OIA Report 1992-06) provided an interesting comparison. While 12.5% of CIRP survey respondents (admitted and enrolled students) had applied to four or more colleges for admissions, 33.1% of the non-enrollment survey respondents had applied to four or more colleges for admissions.

Another analysis of interest was the enrollment activity of ethnic groups. While overall, ethnic minorities opted to enroll more often than to not enroll, they did so in lower percentages than Caucasians (63.7% of accounted for Caucasians enrolled; 52.5% of accounted for ethnic-minorities enrolled). This trend was especially true for Asian students. Of the 179 admitted Asian students accounted for, half had decided not to enroll. Of all the ethnic groups, it was the only one in which more potential Western students had opted to not enroll rather than to enroll.