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AUTHOR Dulniak, Dennis J.
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ABSTRACT

Montana State University's (MSU) use of the Student-Outcomes Information Services (SOIS), developed jointly by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) and the College Board for surveying the characteristics and opinions of entering undergraduate students, is examined. The Entering-Student Questionnaire, one of five developed by SOIS, was chosen to evaluate the efforts in student recruitment, initial student impressions of MSU, opinion of current services and the usefulness of the SOIS questionnaire. A sample of approximately 10 percent of the entering undergraduate population for the 1979 autumn quarter was surveyed. Highlights noted: many students attending MSU chose the school as their first choice: campus services and staff received favorable review: and the SOIS data analysis provided useful information allowing for more extensive review by various offices mentioned in the report. The SOIS questionnaire proves to be a useful tool when used on a properly constructed sampler group. Appendix A provides a cover letter from initial mailing, entering-student questionnaire, additional questions sheet and comment section, and a letter for follow-up mailing. Appendix B offers written comments on such areas as student life difficulties, most helpful office and social/emotional difficulties. Tables offer statistical data in various areas: enrollment: factors influencing college choice: student goals: and degree plans. (LC)

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CHARACTERISTICS AND OPINIONS OF ENTERING UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AT MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

BY

Dennis J. Dulniak
Assistant Registrar

Graduate Intern - Office of the President

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

February, 1980

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Characteristics and Opinions of Entering Undergraduate Students at Montana State University

ABSTRACT

This paper describes Montana State University's use of the Entering Student Questionnaire and data processing service provided by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) and The College Board.

To save development time and expense, MSU decided to try both the printed questionnaire obtained from NCHEMS and the processing service provided by The College Board, even though we intended to use our own in-house capability after gaining initial experience. To minimize cost and respondent burden, we polled only a 10% sample of the entering undergraduate population.

We found both the questionnaire and the processing service to be cost-effective when applied to a sample population and supplemented by locally developed questions (as permitted in the standard processing package).

Results of the survey were of interest to MSU staff working in admissions, on-campus living, and student advising.

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Characteristics and Opinions of Entering Undergraduate Students at Montana State University

INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing perceived need, nationally and locally, for information about students in higher education. In particular, administrators at Montana State University (MSU) are concerned with recruitment, retention and evaluation of existing services. The success of a new method of collecting such information, Student-Outcomes Information Services (SOIS), developed jointly by the National Center for Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) and the College Board, was tested. In October, 1979, the President authorized the graduate intern to proceed with the study, costs to be shared with the Academic Vice President.

The Entering-Student Questionnaire, one of five developed by SOIS, was chosen to evaluate the efforts in student recruitment, initial student impressions of MSU, opinions of current services and the usefulness of the SOIS questionnaire. Because one purpose of this project was to see how the NCHEMS SOIS package may help MSU, only a sample of approximately 10% of the entering undergraduate population for the 1979 Autumn Quarter was surveyed.

An ad hoc committee, with representation by the Admissions, Registrar, Institutional Research and Student Affairs and Services offices, developed the fifteen local questions in addition to those printed on the standard SOIS questionnaire. Additional input by the assistant deans and interested orientation student leaders was obtained. Space for open-ended responses and additional comments was also provided.

What follows is the complete report analyzing the results. Short reports will be issued to various offices as necessary. Complete copies of the data analysis may be obtained from the Academic Vice President, or the Director of Institutional Research.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES

The survey was conducted on a stratified random sample of 188 new freshmen and 69 new transfer students who entered Montana State University during the 1979 Autumn Quarter. Stratification was performed on an enrollment percentage for each college. Following a satisfactory test sample, the questionnaires were mailed from the Office of the President during the fourth week of classes to the student's local address. A follow-up letter, also signed by the President, was mailed a week later to students who had not responded. A stamped self-addressed return envelope was included with the initial mailing.

Of the 257 surveys mailed, 176 (68 percent) were returned. Within a week of the stated return date, 169 (66 percent) were received and sent to NCHEMS for processing. Of the 176 returned, 87 responses were received by the requested date and 89 returned after the follow-up letter was sent. The response rates for freshmen (125 out of 188, 66.4 percent) and transfer (44 out of 69, 63.8 percent) were similar. Two questionnaires were undeliverable. The size of the respondent group is sufficient to confidently extend the results to the larger group of all entering undergraduates at MSU.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

General Characteristics

Respondents were representative of the actual sex breakdown of the sample population. There were 93 (53.4 percent) female and 75 (44.6 percent) male respondents, as compared to 52 and 48 percent, respectively, in the total sample. The ethnicity closely corresponds to the university distribution where 2.8 percent of the students report a non-white status; in the survey, 97 percent reported white or caucasian. Nearly all, 97.6 percent, were enrolled on a full time basis, compared to 97.4 percent of all actual new freshmen.

The college of enrollment for respondents also closely corresponds with the actual percentages in the university. Table 1 shows the number of questionnaires returned in relation to the enrollment by college.

TABLE 1

Total Undergraduate Enrollment by College at Montana State University
1979 Autumn Quarter

College	Student Responses Number	Student Responses Percentage	Total Undergraduate Percentage
General Studies	16	9.5	9.1
Agriculture	17	10.1	10.5
Education	12	7.1	10.4
Engineering	33	19.5	21.7
Letters & Science	35	20.7	17.1
Arts & Architecture	19	11.2	11.4
Business	23	13.6	15.1
Nursing	14	8.3	6.4
Total	169		

Thus, the characteristics of 66 percent of the sampled population closely matched the university's total undergraduate population on ethnicity, full time enrollment and college of enrollment. The remainder of this section will provide additional information without comparison to MSU norms.

Not surprisingly, 90.7 percent of the sampled students are between the traditional ages of 18-22 years old. Six percent would be considered "older than average", greater than 23 years old, equally split between freshmen and transfers. However, 4.7 percent of the entering students were still under 18. The survey reported that 3.5 percent of the entering student population were married. This information is no longer collected for the total university. There was a higher number of married persons among transfers than freshmen, though, surprisingly, all are female and full time students.

Handicapped information showed that 10 percent of the sampled students reported some form of permanent handicap; 6 percent restricted vision, 3.5 percent restricted mobility and 0.6 percent not described. These figures, if representative, may seem high. The questionnaire failed to define the handicap or inquire as to the extent of one's vision or mobility restriction.

Of those reporting, 73.5 percent had chosen MSU as their college of first choice among college and universities to attend. Those who did not have MSU as their first choice indicated their preference as another public 4 year school (16.6 percent), private college (5.7 percent), and 2 year or Vocational/ Technical school (4.4 percent). Table 2 indicates the student's preference by college when MSU was their first choice. Agriculture (86.7 percent) led in this category with Education (57.1 percent) appearing last in the list of popular curriculum areas.

TABLE 2

College Enrollment By Students Whose First Choice College was MSU

1979 Autumn Quarter
(n=115)

College	Percentage
Agriculture	86.7
Business	82.4
Engineering	76.5
Arts & Architecture	73.3
Nursing	70.6
Letters & Science	70.0
Education	57.1
General Studies	Not available

Very few of the students were uncertain about their plans for the next year. A sizeable number (89.3 percent) indicated that they plan to reenroll at MSU next year. However, not even halfway into their first quarter, 7.3 percent of the entering class, mainly female freshmen, had hoped to complete the courses necessary to transfer.

About one third of the sampled students were employed while attending MSU, 42.9 percent were unemployed and did not care to work while attending college, while 23.5 percent would have liked to obtain work. More males and freshmen preferred not to work while attending college. Financial aid applications were submitted by 44.4 percent (52.3 percent for transfer and 41.9 percent for freshmen). An additional 21.9 percent planned to apply. Each married student and nearly all (83.3 percent) of the older students applied for financial aid, indicating more awareness of educational costs and financial independence.

Of the transfers, 50 percent transferred from a public 4 year school, 25 percent came from a public 2 year school, 18 percent from a private school and 7 percent from a Vocational/Technical school.

In response to a question concerning class time preference, morning classes received a high (75.3 percent) preference by every age group, marital status, sex classification and employment category. Evening and weekend classes received no support.

Why Do Students Choose MSU?

There are more than 2700 accredited degree-granting colleges and universities in the United States, with twelve in the State of Montana. Traditionally, 86 percent of the entering MSU freshmen have attended Montana high schools. Of the students in the survey, 83.1 percent of the freshmen and 54.5 percent of the transfers were from Montana. What reasons did they give for coming?

The entering students were asked to respond to a variety of different aspects of MSU. Their responses commented a great deal on the image projected to potential students. Overall, course offerings (65.7 percent) and the academic reputation of MSU (55.6 percent) were cited by a majority of the students as factors that influenced their decision to attend MSU.

TABLE 3

Factors Influencing The Decision To Attend MSU

	Percentage of Respondents		
Factor	Freshmen	Transfer	Total
Course offering	64.0	70.5	65.7
Academic reputation	60.8	40.9	55.6
Former student's advice	43.2	27.3	39.1
Costs	40.0	27.3	37.2
Teacher or friend's advice	26.4	13.6	23.1
Availability of financial aid	19.2	25.0	20.7
Counselor's advice	14.4	4.5	11.8
Retain current employment	5.6	-	4.1
Employer's suggestion	2.4	-	1.8
Institution's social reputation	0.8	-	0.6

Next on the list of important factors for attending MSU (Table 3) were costs and academic reputation, judged more important by new freshmen than by transfers. Availability of financial aid (20.7 percent) was also an important factor. The high response to former student advice (39.1 percent) revealed this influence to be a major recruiting tool. It is the influence of alumni and current students which tended to have a great bearing on MSU's future. The institution's reputation is also significant, based on the 23.1 percent affect by a teacher's or friend's advice. However, the role of the high school counselor, cited by 11.8 percent, appears well down the list.

The survey also questioned how students found out about MSU. The source of information cited most frequently was a relative or friend. Over 7 out of 10 (72.2 percent) said that information from this source was important in their decision to enroll at MSU. Freshmen used the information from people at the high school (64.8 percent) in making their decision. The next chief source of information was the catalog. Approximately 4 out of 10 transfers (40.9 percent) and 5 out of 10 freshmen (52 percent) considered the catalog highly in their decision. Admissions mailing also played a key role. Clearly, other forms of advertising and displays have not had a serious influence on recruitment. The source traditionally seen as having the most direct imput to potential students, college admissions officers, received only 14.4 percent from new freshmen students. Table 4 lists the results of the information sources. It is interesting to note that while teacher and counselor advice appeared well down the list as important factors in Table 3, "people at the high school" ranked very high as an important source of information in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Sources of Information Important to Entering MSU Students

Source	Percentage of Respondents		
	Freshmen	Transfer	Total
Relatives or friends	76.0	59.0	72.2
People at high school	64.8	31.8	56.8
College catalog	52.0	40.9	49.7
Material received in mail	36.8	22.7	33.7
College representative	14.4	2.3	11.2
College placement service	4.0	6.8	4.7
Newspaper or magazine	3.2	2.3	3.0
Education fair, info. display	3.2	-	2.4
Radio or TV advertisement	1.6	-	1.2

Students were also queried about their choice of MSU in the local questions. Table 5 presents the responses about the attractiveness of MSU as perceived by students both before and after enrolling.

TABLE 5

Reasons For Being Attracted to MSU

	Percentage of Respondents					
	As Prospective Students (n=167)			As Enrolled Students (n=168)		
Reasons	Freshmen	Transfer	Total	Freshmen	Transfer	Total
Location	31.7	53.5	37.1	33.9	25.6	32.1
Academic Programs	25.6	37.4	34.1	34.7	39.5	35.7
Reputation	11.4	9.3	11.4	7.3	7.0	7.1
Cost	7.3	2.3	6.0	3.2	2.3	3.0
Size	6.5	2.3	5.4	4.8	7.0	5.4
Recreation opportunities	7.0	4.1	4.8	11.3	14.0	11.9
On-campus activities	-	0.8	0.6	2.4	4.7	3.0
Housing	-	0.8	0.6	1.6	-	1.2
Athletic teams	-	-	-	0.8	-	0.6

Location and academic programs far outdistanced the other responses. One should note that unlike the previous tables in this section, the respondents in Table 5 had to choose the most attractive category. Both freshmen and transfers reported gains upon enrolling in the areas of academic programs, recreational opportunities and on-campus activities. Freshmen appreciation also grew in MSU's location, housing and athletics. Transfer students found the size of the institution to be more suitable than they had anticipated.

The information on student choice should be valuable in planning future recruitment efforts. Consideration should be given to review and incorporate such data in admissions material. The areas of publicity show need for growth and development to market the image of MSU.

Student Goals

Information was also collected from entering students concerning what they wanted to obtain from college - what were their goals? There should be no doubt that the MSU freshmen and transfers have established serious goals for their future. More than 9 out of 10 (91.1 percent) desired to increase their knowledge and understanding in an academic field. The same percentage sought to improve their knowledge and competencies required for a career. This reemphasizes why MSU's enrollment has grown. Students are here to obtain the necessary information and skills to help make them marketable. Table 6 shows the percentage of entering students who reported having particular goals in mind when they came to MSU.

TABLE 6

Goals of Students Entering MSU

Goals	Percentage of Respondents		
	Freshmen	Transfer	Total
To increase my knowledge and understanding in an academic field	91.2	88.6	91.1
To increase my knowledge and/or competencies required for my job or career	92.0	86.4	91.1
To obtain a degree	88.0	79.5	85.8
To meet people	83.2	70.5	80.5
To develop my ability to be independent, self-reliant and adaptable	76.8	81.8	78.7
To learn skills that will enrich my daily life or make me a more complete person	68.8	77.3	71.6
To formulate long term career goals	69.6	59.0	67.5
To increase my self-confidence	60.8	59.1	60.4
To become involved in campus activities	58.4	34.1	52.1
To improve my ability to get along with others	48.0	38.6	46.2
To discover my career interests	54.4	22.7	46.1
To increase my participation in cultural and social events	45.6	40.9	44.4
To improve my leadership skills	42.4	40.9	42.0
To prepare for a new career	36.8	34.1	36.7
To complete courses necessary to transfer	16.0	6.8	14.2

When asked to priortize their goals, slight differences were reported. Freshmen related their top goals as: academic knowledge, a college degree, independence, career competencies and long-term career goals and the enrichment of life. Transfer students, who have had more time to evaluate themselves, ranked their top goals as: a college degree, academic knowledge, enrichment of life and career competencies.

More than 7 out of 10 (74.5 percent) have established their current goal as the attainment of the bachelor's degree. Ultimately, 91.2 percent aspired to a bachelor's degree or higher. Conversely, about 9 percent only intended to take coursework below a bachelor's degree. Table 7 shows the educational aspiration level of MSU's entering undergraduates.

TABLE 7

Degree Plans of Entering MSU Students

	Percentage of Respondents					
	CURRENT			ULTIMATE		
Degree	Freshmen	Transfer	Total	Freshmen	Transfer	Total
Not seeking a degree	6.6	4.7	6.1	3.6	7.3	4.5
Certificate	9.9	7.0	9.1	3.6	2.4	3.2
Associate degree	1.7	2.3	1.8	0.9	-	0.6
Bachelor's degree	72.2	79.1	74.5	32.1	29.3	31.2
Master's degree	5.8	7.0	6.1	34.8	36.6	35.7
Specialist degree	-	-	-	3.6	-	2.6
Professional degree	3.3	-	2.4	9.8	9.8	9.8
Doctoral degree	-	-	-	11.6	14.6	12.3

Such data shows that students at MSU have set goals in preparation for the post-collegiate world. The entering students should be viewed as serious individuals not here to waste their time or talents.

Local Questions

In addition to the items discussed earlier in Table 5, other locally developed questions were asked of the sampled students.

Admissions

THe Office of Admissions was interested in obtaining some feedback on the material sent to incoming students. Responses by both freshmen and transfers (52.0 and 54.5 percent, respectively) rated the information "somewhat helpful."

More freshmen than transfers (41.5 to 31.8 percent) found the material "very helpful" with 9.1 percent of the transfers rating it "of little help". Such response suggests a need for a reevaluation of the information sent to incoming students, especially transfer students.

Orientation

The orientation staff sought additional input in evaluating the September program, especially from transfers. Also, a retrospective evaluation of orientation as a whole was desired.

The summer programs were attended by 63.6 percent of sampled freshmen which compares very closely with the actual attendance by freshmen. The 6.8 percent of the students who did not attend any orientation session can be considered late registrants. Orientation received very favorable reviews with 51.8 percent finding it "a valuable head start" (59.7 percent for freshmen). "Interesting, but of limited value" was claimed by 39.9 percent (53.5 percent for transfers). Only 2.4 percent found the program to be of "no value". Student leaders for orientation received 18.6 percent of the share by freshmen as the "most helpful person encountered at MSU". Such information, in conjunction with the evaluations gathered by the Orientation staff, points favorably to the continuation of the program, although program content needs adjustment.

Advising

Recently academic advising has received an increased amount of attention by administrators and students at MSU. A majority (56.2 percent) of respondents described their academic adviser as "friendly and helpful". Transfers were more favorable than freshmen (63.6 to 54.0 percent). Surprisingly, 24.9 percent of the entering students claimed to "have had no contact with an adviser" by the fifth week of classes. Males (30.7 percent) and freshmen (28.2 percent) led in the category of "no contact". Other evaluative categories were: "friendly, but not of much help", 12.4 percent, "not particularly friendly, but helpful" 2.4 percent, "neither friendly nor helpful" 1.8 percent, and "not readily available" 2.4 percent. Overall, advising received good ratings, but an effort should be made to foster more meaningful contact between advisers and all entering students upon their arrival on campus.

Student Life

The student needs, difficulties, and services were also researched in the local questions.

The type of housing did not produce any great surprises. Residence hall living was reported by 72.8 percent of the sampled entering students, of which freshmen comprised 84.4 percent. Off campus living accounted for 18.3 percent with 67.7 percent of them transfers. Of those staying with parents or relatives, 8 out of 10 were freshmen.

Each respondent was asked what aspect of their first quarter at MSU was most confusing. Registration (20.9 percent), and drop/add procedure (12.9 percent) were front runners. Although registration was cited as most confusing for both freshmen and transfers, the transfers did not have the problem freshmen claimed in scheduling classes (4.5 to 16.1 percent). Freshmen also noted more problems with study skills than transfers (11.9 to 6.8 percent). Other points of confusion (in percent of students checking the item) were: location of classrooms (10.4), payment of fees (10.4), library (9.2), academic advising (6.7) and orientation (3.7).

The students were also asked which category of student life created the most difficulty. Academic requirements (22.5 percent) and financial difficulties (20 percent) led the list. Additional responses on courses creating the most difficulty were requested. Math 100 and 121, Biol. 121 and Chem 131 were most frequently mentioned. A complete list of the difficult courses appears in Appendix B. New freshmen had greater difficulty than transfers with academic requirements (24.4 to 17.5 percent). However, one in five of the transfers cited social life as a difficulty, whereas one in twelve of the freshmen did. Responses to other difficulties (in percent of students checking the item) were: personal problems (10), loneliness (7.5), housing and the size of the institution creating a feeling of insignificance (5.6), roommate difficulties (5), health (3.1), and others (11.9). Most numerous among the difficulties not listed were: making decisions, study habits and study time, adjusting to college, lack of privacy, overflow housing, working while going to school, lack of parking space and partying. Additional comments are listed under student life difficulties in Appendix B. It would be interesting to find out if the confusions and difficulties change after one or more quarters.

Emotional difficulties were also requested in the comment section. Homesickness, loss of friends, establishing new friendships and a pressure to consume alcohol were mentioned most often. Appendix B includes a complete listing of mentioned social/emotional difficulties.

Evaluation of the MSU Staff

An overall opinion of the staff was also requested. Overwhelmingly, 83.7 percent of the responses found the MSU staff "friendly and helpful". The transfers, who would have had another institution for comparison, rated the staff higher with an 88.1 percent rate of appreciation. There were no responses for "neither friendly nor helpful" and only 1.2 percent found the staff "not readily available". For the intermediate responses, 7.8 percent rated them "friendly, but not of much help" and 7.2 percent claimed the staff was "not particularly friendly, but knowledgeable." Such response shows the campus as exhibiting an image of openness to students, with some room for improvement. In the open-ended comment section, opinions of the most and least helpful office/personnel were requested. The "most helpful" were led by the resident assistants, advisers, faculty and administrators, financial aid and registrar offices. The "least helpful" office, some of which also appeared in the "most helpful" list, were financial aid, adviser, admissions and traffic. Complete listings appear in Appendix B.

The person cited as most helpful at MSU has been the resident assistant with 35.6 percent of the responses. When computed for only those sampled students who live in the residence halls, the resident assistant obtained 43.6 percent (57.9 percent for transfer and 44.7 percent for freshmen). For all sampled students, the instructor/faculty claimed 15.6 percent, student leader 14.4 percent and adviser 12.5 percent. As previously mentioned, the orientation student leaders received 18.8 percent of the freshmen responses, followed by instructor/faculty 9.3 percent, adviser 8.5 percent and dean or assistant dean 6.8 percent. Ten percent of all responses indicated someone else. Table 8 lists the results of most helpful personnel from the rated question.

TABLE 8

The Most Helpful Person (Excluding Relatives and Roommates) Encountered At MSU (n=160)

	Percentage of Respondents		
	Freshmen	Transfers	Total
Resident Assistant*	39.0	26.8	35.6
Instructor/Faculty	9.3	34.1	15.6
Orientation Student Leader	18.6	-	14.4
Adviser	8.5	24.4	12.5
Other	11.9	4.9	10.0
Dean or Assistant Dean	6.8	2.4	5.6
The Ask Us Desk	4.2	-	3.1
Departmental Secretary	1.7	4.9	2.5
Administrator		2.4	0.6

*When computed for only those students who live in the Residence Halls, the following totals apply:

44.7	57.9	46.3

The final question asked if the students would be interested in working on any weak areas identified or improving the questionnaire. Surpisingly, 51.3 percent of the respondents were willing to be contacted. There will be an attempt made sometime in February 1980 to contact the eighty-one students to attend a meeting for discussion of the results and possible improvements.

SUMMARY

This report presents a review of the findings of a sample survey conducted by Montana State University using the Entering-Student Questionnaire of the Student Outcomes Information Services (SOIS) made available by NCHEMS and the College Board. It includes responses from 66 percent of the sampled new freshmen and transfer undergraduate population that entered MSU in the fall of 1979. Some highlights of the report are:

1. Many students attending MSU chose the school as their first choice.
2. Students viewed MSU as having the desired course offerings and a high academic reputation. Academic programs, location and recreational opportunities were rated high in terms of attractiveness.
3. Prospective students rely heavily on information from friends, relatives, high school contacts, the college catalog and admissions material.
4. Students attending are serious in receiving an education and degree to prepare them in their future careers. Their educational aspiration level also shows their goal-mindedness.
5. Campus services and staff received very favorable review.
6. The SOIS data analysis provided much needed information allowing for more extensive review by the respective offices mentioned in the report.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The SOIS questionnaire, when used on a properly constructed sample, appears to be an efficient and effective method of collecting and analyzing student opinions. Initial feedback suggests these opinions are of great interest and valuable to several offices on the MSU campus.
2. The data collected is stored on computer tape output. This will permit additional cross tabulations and analysis, not part of SOIS's standard service, when applicable.

Recommendations

1. The report be made available to the offices and personnel for a more extensive review and in-depth analysis.
2. The SOIS analysis be compared to the American College Testing Program (ACT) research service reports.
3. The pool of sample students be followed to investigate their rate of retention at MSU.

APPENDIX A

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MSU

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BOZEMAN 59717

Dear Student:

On behalf of the faculty and staff I would like to welcome you as a new student to Montana State University. We are interested in your impressions of various programs and offices during your first quarter. We are also interested in learning why you have chosen to come to Montana State University. You can be particularly helpful in our institutional planning as we attempt to improve our overall services to students.

In order to carry this out, we must be aware of how our students regard our efforts to serve them. To help determine this, enclosed is a confidential questionnaire. Instructions for its completion are included in the sheets directly following this letter. The questions developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems use the term "college" which should be interpreted as University (MSU). We are asking that you complete the questionnaire and return it to us in the enclosed envelope by October 26, 1979.

You may notice the questionnaire is coded and requests personal data. Please complete all sections, including the Personal Identification Section. The information will remain confidential and your responses will be used only as part of our statistical report.

This report will hopefully result in changes and revisions in University policies and procedures. As a member of a select group of incoming students, you are in a unique position to help us better our University. Your cooperation and assistance in completing the questionnaire is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,

William J. Tietz
President

Entering-Student Questionnaire

PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION SECTION

Do not complete this section unless you are asked to do so. *Please print.*

LAST NAME _____ (1-12)

FIRST NAME _____ (13-20)

MIDDLE INITIAL _____ (21)

ANY OTHER NAME WHICH MAY APPEAR ON YOUR SCHOOL OR COLLEGE RECORDS _____

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER _____ (22-30)

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____ - _____

PERMANENT MAILING ADDRESS NUMBER AND STREET _____ (31-55)

CITY _____ (56-70)

STATE _____ (71-72)

ZIP CODE _____ (73-77)

National Center for Higher Education Management Systems
The College Board

STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION

INSTRUCTIONS:

Specific directions are given for completing many of the questions in this questionnaire. Where no directions are given, please circle the number or letter of the most appropriate response, such as in the sample question below.

Sample:

4. Are you currently married?
   0 Yes
   (1) No

If you are not currently married, you would circle the number 1.

1. What is your sex?
78 — 0 Female
     1 Male

2. How do you describe yourself? *Circle one.*
79 — 0 American Indian or Alaskan Native
     1 Asian, Pacific Islander, or Filipino
     2 Black or Afro-American
     3 Hispanic, Chicano, or Spanish-speaking American
     4 White or Caucasian
     5 Other _____

3. How old are you?
80 — 0 Under 18
     1 18 to 22 years
     2 23 to 25 years
     3 26 to 30 years
     4 31 to 40 years
     5 41 to 50 years
     6 51 to 60 years
     7 61 years or more

4. Are you currently married?
81 — 0 Yes
     1 No

5. Do you feel that you have a permanent handicap? *Circle* **all** *that apply.*
82 0 No
83 1 Yes, restricted mobility
84 2 Yes, restricted hearing
85 3 Yes, restricted vision
86 4 Yes, but I prefer not to record it on this form
87 5 Other _____

6. a Have you previously enrolled in any postsecondary educational institution? *If you have enrolled in more than one, please circle the most recent.*
88 — 0 No, I have not been previously enrolled
     1 Yes, at this institution
     2 Yes, at a public two-year college
     3 Yes, at a public four-year college or university
     4 Yes, at a private college or university
     5 Yes, at a vocational/technical school, hospital school of nursing, trade school, or business school
     6 Other _____

   b If you have attended another college, please write in the name of the one you most recently attended.

   _____

7. The following statements reflect the goals of many college students. *Please circle the letters of* **all** *those goals that are important to you.*

Academic Goals

89 A To increase my knowledge and understanding in an academic field
90 B To obtain a certificate or degree
91 C To complete courses necessary to transfer to another educational institution
92 D Other _____

Career-Preparation Goals

93 E To discover my career interests
94 F To formulate long-term career plans and/or goals
95 G To prepare for a new career
96 H Other _____

Job- or Career-Improvement Goals

97 I To improve my knowledge, technical skills, and/or competencies required for my job or career
98 J To increase my chances for a raise and/or promotion
99 K Other _____

Social and Cultural-Participation Goals

100 L To become actively involved in student life and campus activities
101 M To increase my participation in cultural and social events
102 N To meet people
103 O Other _____

Personal-Development and Enrichment Goals

104 P To increase my self-confidence
105 Q To improve my leadership skills
106 R To improve my ability to get along with others
107 S To learn skills that will enrich my daily life or make me a more complete person
108 T To develop my ability to be independent, self-reliant, and adaptable
109 U Other _____

8. From the list of goals in question 7, please select the three that are most important to you and enter their codes below. For example, if your most important goal is "To obtain a certificate or degree," enter the letter B in the first box.

Most Important	Second Most Important	Third Most Important
☐	☐	☐
110	111	112

9. What degree are you **currently** working toward at our college, **and** what is the highest degree you **ultimately** plan to earn? *Circle a number in each column.*

	Current	Ultimate	
	0	0	Not seeking a certificate or degree
	1	1	Certificate
	2	2	Associate degree
113 / 114	3	3	Bachelor's degree
	4	4	Master's degree
	5	5	Specialist degree (e.g., Ed.S.)
	6	6	Professional degree (e.g., medicine, law, theology)
	7	7	Doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., D.B.A.)

10. a. Please write in your intended major or area of study at our college.

_____

b. Now look at **List A: Majors and Areas of Study** and enter in the boxes below the code number of the category in which your major or area of study falls.

☐☐☐☐

115 118

11. What is your intended enrollment status?

119
- 0. Primarily for credit — full-time (12 or more hours each term enrolled)
- 1 Primarily for credit — part-time (less than 12 hours each term enrolled)
- 2 Primarily **not** for credit

12. What will your primary employment or occupation status be during your first term at our college? *Circle the most appropriate response.*

120
- 0 Employed more than half time
- 1 Employed half time or less
- 2 Homemaker, not employed outside of the home
- 3 Not employed but would like to work
- 4 Not employed and do not care to work while attending college

13. The decision to attend a particular college is usually influenced by a variety of factors. *Please circle* **all** *of the factors that influenced your choice to attend our college.*

- 121 A Academic reputation of our college
- 122 B Course offerings
- 123 C Former student's advice
- 124 D Teacher's or friend's advice
- 125 E Counselor's advice
- 126 F Employer's suggestion
- 127 G Will help me retain my current employment
- 128 H Costs
- 129 I Availability of financial aid
- 130 J Institution's social reputation
- 131 K Close to home
- 132 L Wanted a change in scenery or location
- 133 M Range and availability of student services
- 134 N I can identify with fellow students
- 135 O Inconvenient to go elsewhere
- 136 P Other _____

14. How did you learn about our college? *Please circle* **all** *items that apply.*

- 137 0 From people at my high school
- 138 1 From relatives, friends, or acquaintances
- 139 2 From a representative of this college
- 140 3 From a college placement service or some other education-information service
- 141 4 From a college catalog
- 142 5 From material I received in the mail
- 143 6 From material I read in a newspaper or magazine
- 144 7 From a radio or TV advertisement
- 145 8. From an information display at an education fair, shopping center, county fair, or similar location
- 146 9 Other _____

15. a. Was our college your first choice?

147
- 0 Yes
- 1 No

b. If no, what kind of college was your first choice?

148
- 0 A public two-year college
- 1 A public four-year college or university
- 2 A private college or university
- 3 A vocational/technical school, hospital school of nursing, trade school, or business school
- 4 Other _____

What was the name of the college that was your first choice?

_____

16. Do you plan to apply for financial aid at our college?

149
- 0 Yes, I have already applied
- 1 Yes, I plan to apply
- 2 No, I do not think I will ever apply

17. When would you most prefer to take your classes?
Circle one

150
- 0 Weekday mornings
- 1 Weekday afternoons
- 2 Weekday evenings
- 3 Anytime during the week
- 4 Anytime during the weekend
- 5 No preference

18. Do you plan to enroll at our college next term?

151
- 0 Yes
- 1 No, I will complete my program this term
- 2 No, but I plan to return at some future date
- 3 No, I plan to transfer to another college
- 4 No, I have no plans for additional education at this time
- 5 I do not yet know my plans for next term

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SECTION

Additional questions may have been added to this printed form by your college. If you have been asked to answer additional questions, please use the boxes below to record your responses.

19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33
152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166

Please use the space below for any comments you have about our college, this questionnaire, or anything else you care to share with us.

24

9341600000045400
10M 279 LP Rob 2BA306

LIST A: MAJORS AND AREAS OF STUDY

Programs usually requiring four or more years of study

0100	Agriculture and Natural Resources
0200	Architecture and Environmental Design
0300	Area Studies (includes Asian Studies, Black Studies, etc.)
0400	Biological and Life Sciences
0500	Business and Management
0600	Communications
0700	Computer and Information Sciences
0800	Education
0900	Engineering
1000	Fine and Applied Arts (includes Art, Dance, Drama, Music, etc.)
1100	Foreign Languages
1200	Health Professions
1300	Home Economics (includes Clothing and Textiles, Institutional Housekeeping, and Food Service Management, etc.)
1400	Law
1500	Letters (includes Creative Writing, Literature, Philosophy, Speech, etc.)
1600	Library Science
1700	Mathematics
1800	Military Sciences
1900	Physical Sciences (includes Chemistry, Physics, Earth Sciences, etc.)
2000	Psychology
2100	Public Affairs and Social Services
2200	Social Sciences (includes Anthropology, Economics, History, Political Science, Sociology, etc.)
2300	Theology and Religion
4900	Interdisciplinary Studies
6000	Other
7000	Undecided but probably program of four or more years

Programs usually requiring less than four years of study

5000	Business and Commerce Technologies (includes Accounting, Banking, Commercial Art, Hotel and Restaurant Management, etc.)
5005	Secretarial Technologies (includes Office Supervising and Management, Stenographic and Typing Technology, etc.)
5006	Personal Service Technologies (includes Stewardess Training, Cosmetologist, etc.)
5100	Data Processing Technologies (includes Computer Programming, Keypunching, etc.)
5200	Health Services and Paramedical Technologies (includes Dental and Medical Assistant Technology, LPN, Occupational and Physical Therapy Technology, etc.)
5300	Mechanical and Engineering Technologies (includes Aeronautical and Automotive Technology, Welding, Electronics, Architectural Drafting, etc.)
5317	Construction and Building Technologies (includes Carpentry, Plumbing, Sheet Metal, Heating, etc.)
5400	Natural Science Technologies (includes Agriculture Technology, Environmental Health Technology, Forestry and Wildlife Technology, etc.)
5404	Food Services Technologies (includes Food Service Supervising, Institutional Food Preparation, etc.)
5500	Public Service Technologies (includes Law Enforcement Technology, Teacher Aide Training, Fire Control Technology, Public Administration Technology, etc.)
5506	Recreation and Social Work Related Technologies
8000	Other
9000	Undecided but probably less than four year program

INSTRUCTIONS: Select the number below which best describes your response. Record your answers in the appropriate boxes provided for the ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS SECTION.

19. Was the information you received from the Office of Admissions upon being accepted to MSU

1. very helpful
2. somewhat helpful
3. of little help
4. of no help
5. never received any

20. In which college are you enrolled?

1. General Studies
2. Agriculture
3. Arts and Architecture
4. Business
5. Education
6. Engineering
7. Letters & Sciences
8. Nursing

21. Before attending MSU, what was your home state?

1. Montana
2. Wyoming
3. South Dakota
4. North Dakota
5. Minnesota
6. California
7. Washington
8. Other U.S. State
9. Canadian Province
0. Foreign country, other than Canada

22. In what type of housing are you currently living?

1. Residence hall
2. Sorority or Fraternity house
3. Family housing
4. Off campus apartment, house, trailer, etc.
5. Locally with parents or relatives
6. Other

23. Which Orientation program did you attend?

1. June 25-27, Freshmen
2. July 16-18, Freshmen
3. August 6-8, Freshmen
4. September 15-18, Freshmen
5. September 16-18, Transfer
6. Did not attend

24. Regarding the Orientation program, how did you find the program?

1. A valuable head start
2. Interesting, but of limited value
3. Of no value
4. Did not participate

25. Which of the following best describes your academic adviser?

1. Friendly and helpful
2. Friendly, but not of much help
3. Not particularly friendly, but helpful
4. Neither friendly nor helpful
5. Not readily available
6. Have had no contact with an adviser

26. Which of the following best describes the quality of academic advising you received?

1. Very beneficial
2. Fairly helpful
3. Advice is unclear or inadequate.
4. Have been given incorrect information
5. Have had no contact with an adviser

27. Generally speaking, do you find the staff at MSU

1. friendly and helpful
2. friendly, but not of much help
3. not particularly friendly, but knowledgeable
4. neither friendly nor helpful
5. not readily available

28. As a perspective student, what did you find <u>most</u> attractive about MSU?

1. location
2. size
3. reputation
4. academic programs/curriculum/major
5. recreational opportunities
6. on-campus activities
7. cost
8. athletic teams
9. housing

29. Now that you are enrolled, what do you feel is most attractive about MSU?

1. location
2. size
3. reputation
4. academic programs/curriculum/major
5. recreational opportunities
6. on-campus activities
7. cost
8. athletic teams
9. housing

30. What aspect of your first quarter at MSU was <u>most</u> confusing to you?

1. Orientation
2. Registration
3. Academic Advising
4. Drop/Add Procedure
5. Scheduling
6. Locating classrooms and offices
7. Payment of Fees
8. Study Skills
9. Library
0. Other (Please specify in Comment Section)

31. Which of the following has created the most difficulty while at MSU?

1. Social Life
2. Academic Requirements
3. Financial Difficulties
4. Housing
5. Size of Institution (feeling of insignificance)
6. Personal Problems
7. Health
8. Loneliness
9. Roommate Difficulties
0. Other (Please specify in Comment Section)

TURN OVER FOR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

32. So far, the most helpful person (excluding relatives and roommates) encountered at MSU has been?

1. Resident Assistant (RA)
2. Orientation Student Leader
3. Instructor/Faculty
4. Adviser
5. Dean or Assistant Dean
6. Administrator
7. Departmental secretary
8. The ASK US desk
9. Other (Please specify in Comment Section)

33. We would appreciate your assistance in working on any weak areas you may have identified and in improving the questionnaire. If you would be willing to be contacted, please indicate your name and address on the cover of this questionnaire.

1. Willing to be contacted
2. Prefer not to be contacted, but included are some written comments below
3. Prefer not to be contacted

COMMENT SECTION (Confidential responses to be written directly on this sheet)

A. Responses or additional information to previous questions.

B. What particular course(s) are you presently having the most difficulty with?

C. What social/emotional difficulties have you encountered at MSU?

D. What aspect of student life has given you the most difficulty?

E. What office/personnel at MSU has been most helpful to you? Why?

F. What office/personnel at MSU has been least helpful to you? Why?

Thank you.

00000

MSU

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BOZEMAN 59717

Dear Student:

Last week you were sent a questionnaire requesting responses as new students to Montana State University. As of today, we have not received the completed questionnaire. Please take a few minutes, locate the packet and complete and return it promptly.

You are in a unique position to provide information that will hopefully allow us to better serve our students. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation and assistance.

Sincerely,

William J. Tietz
President

TELEPHONE (406) 994-2341

APPENDIX B

Contents

Item		Page
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APPENDIX B

The following pages represent a complete listing of the written comments received. They are organized by question or category and tabulations made for multiple responses.

B-1 With what particular course(s) are you recently having the most difficulty?

Number	Course	Comments
13	Math 100	Nobody takes the time to listen
		Unclear about techniques and solutions
		Poor program
13	Math 121	Math Learning Center helpful (2)
		Foreign student language barrier
9	Biol 121	Repetition from high school
9	Chem 131	
3	Buac 224	
3	M E 111	
3	Psy 103	Poor instructor organization (Sec 03)
3	Hist 105	Too specialized
2	Econ 105	
2	EE 101	Theorist, rather than practical
2	Engl 121	
2	Math 001	Textbook unavailable
		My procrastination
2	Math 107	
2	Spcm 101	Text apart from lecture
2	Spcm 103	Unclear instructor (Sec 01)

Courses receiving one response were as follows:

Art 100	
Art 101	
Bumg 110	Lots of reading
Buoa 221	
Chem 121	
Chem 135	
Chem 271	
CS 111	
Esci 104	What is instructor's intent?
Edfd 100	Library confusing
Engl 123	
Engl 330	Don't agree with instructor's philosophies
Hist 116	Instructor difficult to understand
He-C 219	
He-C 221	
He-F 113	
He-F 213	Multiple Guess questions
Math 114	
Math 221	
ML-F 350	

(continued on next page)

Mus	118	Boring
N	106	Boring
Phil	212	Would like 2 hour Philosophy class
Pe-C	158	Heavy guns
Phys	101	
Pols	105	
Rels	204	
Soc	101	
Soc	229	
Spcm	166	Out of class observations
Stat	216	
Thtr	250	

B-2 What social/emotional difficulties have you encountered at MSU?

Number	Difficulty
19	Homesickness, loss of friends
8	Establishing new friendships, meeting people
6	Overconsumption of alcohol by majority of students, pressure to consume
4	Lack of friends
4	Inconsiderate neighbors
3	Adjustment from a small school
3	Loneliness
3	Accent creates "foreigner" image
2	Time management
2	Under "19"
2	High School Syndrome, lack of status
2	Boyfriend difficulties, separation

Difficulties mentioned once were:

Engaged men
Most guys are jerks
Money Management
Too little free time
Pressure to join clubs
Heavy academic load
Cliques
Stress
Overflow housing
No connection between high rises and other halls, the lack of campus community
Lack of money
Being from Butte is sometimes used against you
Fear of failure
Uncertain major
Lack of self-confidence
People demand from studying time
Size of campus makes one feel unimportant
Getting along with others
Roommate problems

B-3 What aspect of student life has given you the most difficulty?

Number	Difficulty
10	Decisions, overloaded - choose among alternatives
8	Study habits/skills
8	Study time, keep at the books
6	Adjusting
4	Little privacy, close quarters
4	Study time vs partying
4	Roommates
3	Overflow housing - Colter Hall, clanking pipes, drafty concrete floors
3	Partying
3	Making friends
3	Loud residence halls
2	Opposite sex
2	Poor students, poverty
2	Find out what's going on
2	Transportation
2	Test pressure
2	Little time for self, friends

Difficulties mentioned once were:

Getting to and from classes
Lack of student life
Off campus isolation from social life
Parking
Orientation, hard for commuters, September brochure did not outline time line or expectations well
Self discipline
Transferring credits
Budgeting oneself
Getting involved in floor activities
Doing the wash, need more dryers
Living with girlfriend
Signing up for racquetball
Money management
Classes needed may not be available
Too many people
Emotional stability, easily depressed and upset, pressures
Work
Dealing with pompous upperclassmen
Sororities dominate campus activities, nothing to do on weekends
No sinks in rooms
Library Resources
Need helpful hints
Frats stupid, too much partying, ideals in wrong places
Classes that meet once a week - forget to study
Need for Food Service after 6:30; Ski team works out until 6 P.M.

B-4 Responses for "other" (11.9 percent of the responses) from the question of what created the most difficulty while at MSU?

Number	Difficulty
3	Working and going to school
3	Parking spaces, few and far between - need for larger lot near North Hedges
2	Understanding what instructors want for exams and quizzes
2	Library, too hard to locate anything, gave up

Other difficulties mentioned once were:

See people waste themselves away with booze
I miss my parents
Coping with pressures
Not informed to apply for deferred payment in advance
Lack of sleep due to friends or studies
Loneliness or homesickness
Inability to concentrate on studies
Availability of classes (wanted Art which was closed)
Transferring - finding out how many credits will eventually transfer - slowness and unorganization is incredible
Obtaining classes needed as a transfer student
Hassle to find profs and adviser to sign drop/add cards
Registration
Need for private room
Partying interferes with academics
Commuting - especially evening exams
Loaded academic requirements

5. What office/personnel at MSU has been the most helpful?

Number	Who
16	Resident Assistant (applauds for Bob)
15	Adviser - great first impression/those mentioned by name were: Drs. Hermanson, Haines, Berg, Deans Rose' and Groenhout, Music Instructors (2), Prevet, Richard Whitman, Barbara Tremper, Alan Leech and William Neff
8	Financial Aid Office
7	Registrar's Office - registration was the easiest I have ever gone through, though as a transfer student, most wanted classes were closed. In comparison to other systems I've encountered, yours is very good.
5	General Studies advisers
4	Student leaders - Dee Dee Atchley
4	Ask us
3	Returning Juniors and Seniors and Sophomores - upperclassmen
3	Jaynee Drange
3	Desk clerks
3	Library
3	Math Learning Center
2	Study Skills workshop - Dr. Hall
2	Sister - junior
2	Health Service

(continued on next page)

Most helpful personnel mentioned once were:

Boyfriend - sophomore
Staff in Cooley Lab
Christian girl on floor
Friends to establish help sessions
Director of Christian fellowship program
Fraternity
Student Affairs & Services employees
Coaches
Teaching Assistants
Accounting department
Dr. Copeland
Lark Carter
Alanna Brown
Business Office
Student Affairs & Services
Bookstore
On Campus Living
ASMSU

6. What office/personnel at MSU have been least helpful to you?

Number	Who
11	Financial Aid - unaware of deferred payment ahead of time, dissatisfied with $5.00 service charge - misdirected activity, BEOG confusion - scholarship check - additional forms - confusion (2), questions never answered - vague more personal evaluation of eligibility - not concerned to deal with people
5	Adviser - no permanent adviser - who is it? told just what classes I had to have, no help with scheduling - Adrienne Hess, too pushy for MSU - Computer Science, pushy
4	Admissions - residency, not friendly - Transfer, residency rudeness - transfer credit
3	Traffic - unjust ticketing policy - more parking
2	On Campus Living - overflow - housing application
2	Music Building Office - runaround - administrator never available
2	Registrar's Office - Honor Scholarship - Social Security Number - registration extremely discombobulated

Least helpful personnel mentioned once were:

Math Learning Center - no time to listen
Professor - promptness
PE Office - rude, ignored questions
SAS - need help with a job or work study
Instructors
Business Office
Resident Assistant - bust, preoccupied
Health Service
Cafeteria clerks - crotchety old ladies
Student activities - how to get involved - unfamiliarity
Take more time to help each individual

7. Problems and general comments that were received:

Managing social and college activities with money and time
Working, due to not (yet) applying for Financial Aid, interferes with school work
Adviser didn't help with schedule
Not charged full fees at prepayment
Overflow housing
Nursing - unknown adviser, uncertainty about major, courses
Need 30+ hours per day
Need more information concerning health services
Confused academic expectations
No push for academic excellence
English adviser directed me to UM, visited both campuses, talked with an Assistant Dean, found MSU more desirable.
Need for full time FM Rock station
Thanks for a great job with Homecoming
Rush week should be put as a mandatory activity for new freshmen, most educational
This seems to be therapuetic, by commenting, it is cleansing and almost making a commitment to change
Questionnaire, how was I chosen? - third one this quarter, compared to others, good - very complete and comprehensive, needs no improving - fine, keep it the same way

The responses in Appendix B were taken directly from the option evaluation form. There was no effort to interpret, rewrite or eliminate comments. Duplication was unavoidable due to this process.