

Entering Student Survey – Executive Summary
Marshfield and Wausau Campuses
FALL 2023 COHORT

Participants and Survey Administration

- An invitation was sent to all undergraduate, degree-seeking students who registered for an Orientation program.
- Reminders were sent to students every two weeks.
- 64 completed surveys as of 8/28/23. 28 students are enrolled at the Marshfield campus; 37 students are enrolled at Wausau; 8 students are enrolled at multiple campuses.

For purposes of comparison, percentages from 2022 are in parentheses.

Significant changes of 4% or more are highlighted in yellow.

Significant changes of 4% or less are highlighted in turquoise.

Participant Demographics

Gender and Racial/Ethnic Identities (Mark all that apply):

- 64% (63%) of respondents identified as female; 30% (29%) identified as male; 6% (6%) identified as non-binary or gender fluid
- 75% (94%) of respondents identified as white; 6% (2%) identified as African American/Black; 9% (2%) as Asian or Asian American; 3% (0%) identified as American Indian, Alaska Native, Indigenous, or First Nations

Student Types (Mark all that apply):

- 92% (86%) of respondents identified as First Year Students; 8% (14%) identified as Transfer Students
- 100% (86%) of Transfer students came from an in-state, four-year college, or university.

The University Application Process

High School Background and Advanced Academic Program Participation (Mark all that apply):

- 91% (92%) of respondents attended a public HS; 0% (4%) attended a private HS.
- 40% (29%) participated in the Advanced Placement (AP) program.
- 36% (33%) participated in a Dual Enrollment program: ECC, CESA, HCS
- 12% (14%) participated in an Honors Program
- 0% (4%) participated in the International Baccalaureate program.

12% (19%) of respondents did not participate in any advanced academic programs while in HS.

College Applications

- 74% (69%) of respondents applied to fewer than three schools; 44% (39%) applied only to UWSP.
- 8% (6%) applied to more than five schools.

78% (73%) of respondents reported UWSP was their FIRST-choice institution

- 16% (22%) reported UWSP as their second-choice institution; 7% (6%) reported UWSP as less than their second choice institution.

Of the 22% (27%) of respondents who reported that UWSP was not their first-choice institution, 79% (50%) reported they plan to transfer after one or two years - This represents 17% (13.5%) of ALL respondents.

86% (79%) intend to graduate from the university in four or fewer years.

Here are the TOP FIVE reasons why students chose to attend UWSP (Mark all that apply):

	2022	2023
Location – Close to home	90%	83%
Affordability	88%	78%
Size of the university	31%	37%
Ability to take courses on multiple campuses	31%	29%
Accessibility of campus resources	24%	27%
Friends attending here	18%	29%

Declared Major and Major Selection

The top five MAJORS of respondents:

- Undecided
- Business Administration
- Biology
- Nursing RN to BSN
- Psychology

For those students who DECLARED their major:

- 54% (61%) do not plan to change their major, but an additional 39% (18%) expressed concern about being in the right degree program to fit their long-term academic/career plans.
- 7% (22%) expressed concern around whether they can manage the required coursework for their major.

Why Our Students are Attending College

Here are the FIVE most important reasons our students are attending college, based on the percentage who felt it was IMPORTANT or VERY IMPORTANT:

	2022	2023
To be able to make more money	90%	79%
To learn more about things that interest me	80%	89%
To be able to get a better job	80%	81%
To get real-world and hands-on experience that leads to career-focused opportunities	78%	79%
To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	73%	70%
To prepare myself for graduate or professional school	57%	71%

Family's Educational Attainment - The highest degree earned for each of the following adults living with the respondent:

- Mother – 42% (45%) earned their bachelor's or higher.
- Father – 24% (23%) earned their bachelor's or higher.
- Stepmother – 72% (20%) earned their bachelor's or higher.
- Stepfather – 40% (44%) earned their bachelor's or higher.
- Legal Guardian – 43% (66%) earned their bachelor's or higher.
- Siblings – 27% (45%) earned their bachelor's or higher.

52% (43%) of the respondents self-identified as first-generation college students – neither parent/guardian earned a bachelor's degree.

Living Arrangements for the First Year

8% (4%) of respondents plan to live on campus. Their primary reasons for living on campus included (Mark all that apply):

- To meet new people – 100% (0%)
- To live around other first-year students – 60% (50%)
- Proximity to academic buildings and campus resources – 40% (100%)

Of the 92% (96%) of the students who plan to live off campus:

- 47% (55%) will live within 10 miles of campus.
- 34% (29%) will live 11-20 miles from campus.
- 19% (16%) will live 21 or more miles from campus.

76% (69%) of commuter students plan to live with at least one family member, while 5% (4%) plan to live alone.

The primary reasons commuters chose to live off campus include (Mark all that apply):

- To save money – 84% (91%)
- To remain close to my family – 53% (73%)
- To avoid the stress of living with random roommates, the noise – 31% (64%)

7% (9%) noted the limited availability of on-campus housing.

Financial Issues

Respondents plan to finance their education through (Mark all that apply):

- Working while in college – 86% (82%)
- Their own savings – 59% (73%)
- Scholarships – 75% (71%)
- Grants (e.g., Pell Grant) – 24% (43%)
- Loans – 40% (35%)
- Parents/Family income – 43% (35%)
- Other financial aid (e.g., Work Study) – 45% (22%)

Of the respondents who plan to work while in college, their primary reasons include (Mark all that apply):

- To pay for course-related expenses (tuition, fees, books) – 90% (84%)
- Having spending money – 63% (78%)
- Paying for living expenses (rent, food, utilities) – 56% (49%)

19% (8%) cited the need to provide for family back home or for their spouse/children.

Estimated family income of respondents:

- 29% (36%) of respondents cited a combined family income of \$100,000/year or more.
- 28% (30%) of respondents cited a combined income below \$50,000/year.

Extracurricular Engagement in the First Year

The FIVE most commonly cited plans for extracurricular engagement include (Mark all that apply):

	2022	2023
None of the Above	33%	35%
A leadership development program		24%
Club Sports		22%
Music – performance or concert attendance	24%	21%
A religious or spiritual community	10%	16%
A registered student organization	27%	13%
A program or activity sponsored by CASE	22%	11%
A program or activity sponsored by a degree-granting college	16%	10%

Here are some trends on how incoming students spent their time in HIGH SCHOOL (HS) and how they plan to spend their time in their first year in COLLEGE (COL):

		HS	COL	HS	COL
		2022		2023	
Studying/Homework	6 or MORE hours/week	38%	55%	34%	54%
Socializing w/friends	11 or MORE hours/week	34%	14%	26%	17%
Talking with teachers outside of class	3 or MORE hours/week	12%	14%	5%	19%
Exercise or Playing Sports	6 or MORE hours/week	48%	14%	44%	37%
Partying	3 or MORE hours/week	18%	16%	6%	5%
Working for Pay	11 or MORE hours/week	63%	63%	59%	70%
Volunteering in Your Community	3 or MORE hours/week	20%	20%	25%	28%
Participating in Student Clubs/Groups	1 or MORE hours/week	63%	61%	54%	65%
Watching TV/Movies	6 or MORE hours/week	26%	22%	17%	7%
Household Chores or Childcare	3 or MORE hours/week	59%	44%	48%	43%
Reading for Pleasure	1 or MORE hours/week	49%	58%	36%	45%
Gaming – Video or Computer Games	3 or MORE hours/week	44%	32%	34%	22%
Using Social Media	3 or MORE hours/week	83%	61%	71%	48%

How Likely are Our Students to do Various Behaviors?

Here are the items that **at least 70% of incoming students** said it was MODERATELY or VERY LIKELY they would do:

- Make at least a “B” average – 98% (92%)
- Socialize with someone of a different racial or ethnic group – 86% (92%)
- Communicate regularly with their professors – 91% (82%)
- Discuss course content with other students outside of class – 74% (74%)

Here are the five things that students said it was LEAST likely that they will do:

- Take a temporary leave of absence from college – 5% (2%)
- Take foreign language classes 17% (27%)
- Participate in a study abroad program – 26% (20%)
- Be a part of a religious or spiritual community – 31% (24%)
- Transfer to another university or community/technical college – 34% (35%)

43% (37%) said they would seek personal counseling, while 66% (65%) said they would get tutoring or other academic support for specific courses.

The Primary Concerns of Incoming Students

Here are the top five issues that respondents said they were **VERY or EXTREMELY CONCERNED** about heading into their first semester at UWSP:

- Financial obligations (paying for school, managing money, family finances) – 36% (45%)
- Course registration – taking the right courses, course availability – 31% (20%)
- Deciding on a major/career path – 24% (18%)
- Balancing a part-time job with your academics – 21% (24%)
- Making friends and meeting people – 21% (22%)
- Developing study skills and time management – 19% (25%)
- Their mental health (stress management/emotional health) – 16% (24%)
- Handling the academic rigor of college courses – 12% (27%)

2% (4%) of incoming students are concerned/very concerned about obtaining enough food while in college.

Building Community at UWSP

34% (20%) of incoming students feel it is VERY or EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to experience a sense of community at UWSP.

Here are the top five factors cited by respondents as being very/extremely important when developing their sense of community:

- Meeting people with similar major/career interests – 51% (35%)
- Meeting people with similar values – 46% (41%)
- Meeting people with similar interests/hobbies – 40% (37%)
- Meeting people with similar identities: racial, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation, etc. – 30% (29%)
- Meeting people through participating in campus activities – 23% (22%)
- Meeting people who identify with a culture different from my own – 18% (29%)

How Confident are Our Incoming Students?

Here are the items that 60% or more of incoming students said they are CONFIDENT or VERY CONFIDENT in their abilities to do:

- Understand what professors expect from them academically – 68% (75%)
- Do well academically in their courses – 68% (61%)
- Understand their strengths – 66% (65%)
- Communicate effectively with others – 64% (63%)
- Be a successful college student – 61% (57%)
- Be aware of critical university policies, procedures, and deadlines – 59% (73%)
- Get to know their professors – 54% (65%)
- Write effectively – 54% (61%)
- Manage their money – 54% (61%)
- Think critically in order to solve problems – 52% (61%)

Here are the five items with the largest percentage of students indicating that they are SOMEWHAT or NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT in their abilities to:

- Study when there are other distractions – 63% (65%)
- Manage their time effectively – 62% (55%)
- Develop close friendships with other students – 59% (59%)
- Feel like they are part of the university community – 57% (57%)
- Know what events and activities are happening on campus – 57% (47%)
- Study effectively for college level courses – 54% (61%)

Preferred Methods of University Communication

Outside of email from the university, students overwhelmingly prefer to be communicated with via Text Message 89% (82%).

Here is an Academic Snapshot of Our Fall 2023 Cohort Across all Campuses:

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
HS GPA	3.30	3.30	3.24	3.23	3.30	3.27	3.26
GPA < 3.0	27%	26%	29%	29%	24%	27%	28%
ACT COMP	22.5	22.2	22.0	21.6	21.8	22.2	22.3
ACT Math	21.6	21.3	21.5	20.8	21.4	21.6	21.8
ACT English	21.7	21.4	21.2	20.7	21.2	21.8	21.8
ACT Read	23.6	23.0	22.6	22.5	22.3	22.8	22.6

