

# First Year First Term Survey – Three Year Results Summary (2009-2011)

## Overview

First year students were surveyed during their first fall semester for the third year in Fall of 2011. Typically, students are surveyed around the beginning of October, and the survey is available for approximately two weeks. The 2011 survey was made available at a slightly later date (October 5<sup>th</sup>) and was available for a slightly longer time period (just over three weeks) than in the two previous years. The most recent survey saw an increase in the number of respondents (1,511), and in the response rate (to 32.4%). This continues the trend from the previous two years.

In general, the respondents, and their responses, have remained consistent over the three years of the survey. More female than male students return the survey and they are overrepresented among respondents compared to the campus population as a whole. The distribution of respondents among the different colleges has remained fairly steady over the three years, with no major dips or spikes. One area of change is in the racial/ethnic breakdown – the percentage of respondents who self-reported as *Hispanic/Latino* dropped to 1.8% (from 4.5% and 3.7% the two previous years). There were also far fewer respondents with an unknown race/ethnicity (2.2% compared to 6.8% for both of the previous years). Both of these changes may be due to the inclusion of a new category, *multiple races* that captured 6.2% of respondents. It is possible that students who would have previously only chosen *Hispanic/Latino*, or who would have not selected any category, may have chosen *multiple races* this year.

Included with this summary is a three year overview report that includes information about the survey respondents, and their actions and attitudes in several areas. Notable exceptions will be discussed below, but overall, the survey appears to provide a consistent window into the experiences of first year first term students here at NC State.

## Significant Changes in Responses:

- *Missing Class* – More students indicated that they had skipped classes in 2011 than in previous years. 28.4% of respondents said they had skipped *two to three classes* (compared to 21.3% and 23.0% in the two previous years), and 18.4% of students said they had skipped four or more classes (compared to 9.9% in each of the previous two years).
- *Sense of Belonging and Community* – 47.3% of students in the 2011 survey said that a sense of belonging or community at NC State was *very important* (compared to 60.8% and 56.7% in the previous two years). Correspondingly, more 2011 respondents said that it was *slightly important* (12.8% compared to 6.2% and 8.7%) or *moderately important* (37.5% compared to 31.0% and 32.8%). That might be reflected in the extent to which the 2011 first year students feel a sense of belonging at NC State. When asked about the extent to which they experienced a sense of belonging/community here, fewer 2011 respondents answered *a great deal* (31.9% compared to 41.6% and 34.9% in the two previous years). The number who answered *some* stayed essentially the same as previous years, but more 2011 students answered *not at all or a little*.

This was the first year the survey posed a set of sub-questions for first year students related to their sense of belonging/community. The vast majority of first year students this year said it was *moderately* or *very important* to have a sense of belonging/community in small groups (93.9%) and that they experienced a sense of belonging/community *some* or *a great deal* in small groups (87.7%) at NC State. The equivalent responses asking about their sense of belonging/community in formal organizations was still positive, but less so (79.3% said it was *moderately* or *very important*; 72.6% said that they experienced it *some* or *a great deal*).

- *Confidence* – Students were asked about their confidence in their ability in several areas, and there were a few notable changes.
  - More first year students were confident in their ability to find their way around campus (70.5% said they were *very confident* in 2011 compared to 60.3% and 60.6% in the previous two years).
  - A slightly larger percentage of students in 2011 had less confidence in their ability to relieve or reduce homesickness compared to the previous two years (9% said they were *not at all confident* or *not very confident* in 2011 compared to 6.6% in both of the previous two years)
  - More first year students in 2011 were *not very confident* in their ability to effectively manage their time (16.3% compared to 12.3% and 13.2% in previous years) with a corresponding drop in the percentage who said they were *very confident* (27.0% compared to 32.5% and 34.4%).
  - More students were *very confident* that they could identify at least one campus resource for academic support (56.5% compared to 50.5% and 51.2% in previous years) and that they could identify a group on campus that supports an identity important to them (51.6% compared to 46.6% and 44.5%).
- *Feelings* – First year students in 2011 were more likely to feel lonely *sometimes* (27.5% compared to 22.0% and 23.2%), more likely to feel overwhelmed *often/constantly* (33.2% compared to 24.4% and 25.4%), significantly more likely to *often/constantly* feel concerned about financial issues (31.3% compared to 19.4% and 19.2% in previous years), and more likely to *often/constantly* feel academically underprepared (16.5% compared to 11.9% and 13.8%).

However, this did not make them question their fit at NC State since the percentage of 2011 first year students who said that they *often/constantly* felt NC State was not a good fit only increased a little from 2010 and was actually lower than 2009 (7.5% in 2011, 6.9% in 2010, and 9.3% in 2009).

- *Actions to Engage With NC State* – Students were asked about several areas where they could engage with individuals on campus, and by and large, the 2011 first year students had an across-the-board increase. Higher percentages of students in 2011 answered *a great deal* when asked to what extent they had used an upper-class student, gotten involved in campus activities, developed a relationship with a faculty member, developed a relationship with a staff member, or sought out academic assistance for help with schoolwork.

**2009****Dates:** October 1<sup>st</sup> through October 19<sup>th</sup>**Population:** 4,778 New Freshmen**Return Rate:** 25.4% (1214)**2010****Dates:** September 29<sup>th</sup> through October 9<sup>th</sup>**Population:** 4,703 New Freshmen**Return Rate:** 30.8% (1447)**Respondents:** Women are overrepresented among survey respondents. Students in the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences are slightly overrepresented, while those in the Ag Institute and Engineering are slightly underrepresented among survey respondents.**2011****Dates:** October 5<sup>th</sup> through October 28<sup>th</sup>**Population:** 4,661 New Freshman**Return Rate:** 32.4% (1511)**Respondents:** Women are overrepresented among survey participants. Students in the College of Agriculture & Life Sciences are slightly overrepresented and students in the Ag Institute and DUAP are slightly underrepresented in the sample.**What is your gender?**

	2009		2010		2011	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	653	53.8	822	56.8	850	56.3
Male	661	46.2	625	43.2	661	43.7

**What is your race/ethnicity?**

	2009		2010		2011	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
African American/Black	86	7.1	109	7.5	125	8.3
American Indian/Alaska Native*					9	0.6
Asian/Asian American	62	5.1	67	4.6	78	5.2
Hispanic/Latino	45	3.7	65	4.5	27	1.8
White/Caucasian	939	77.3	1107	76.5	1145	75.8
Multiple races*					94	6.2
Race unknown	82	6.8	99	6.8	33	2.2

\*"American Indian/Alaska Native" was not provided as an answer choice for the 2009 and 2010 surveys. Respondents were also not given the option to select multiple races/ethnicities until the 2011 survey.

**College/School of Enrollment?**

	2009		2010		2011	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
CALS	260	21.4	310	21.4	301	19.9
Design	23	1.9	35	2.4	43	2.8
CED	47	3.9	58	4.0	49	3.2
COE	328	27.0	365	25.2	432	28.6
CNR	28	2.3	45	3.1	44	2.9
CHASS	132	10.9	154	10.6	160	10.6
PAMS	67	5.5	55	3.8	69	4.6
COT	51	4.2	60	4.1	60	4.0
COM	98	8.1	113	7.8	109	7.2
DUAP*	153	12.6	226	15.6	218	14.4
AGI	27	2.2	26	1.8	8	0.5
Unknown					18	1.2

\*Includes respondents from the First Year College, Transition Program, and Environmental Science Program.

**How many hours have you worked per week at an on-campus job?**

	2009		2010		2011	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	1017	94.5	1216	92.3	1243	94.2
10 hours or less	44	4.1	75	5.7	60	4.5
11-19 hours	13	1.2	25	1.9	15	1.1
20-29 hours	0	0.0	1	0.1	1	0.1
30 or more hours	2	0.2	1	0.1	0	0.0

**How many hours have you worked per week at an off-campus job?**

	2009		2010		2011	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	958	89.4	1174	89.9	1188	89.9
10 hours or less	67	6.3	82	6.3	90	6.8
11-19 hours	31	2.9	38	2.9	34	2.6
20-29 hours	10	0.9	10	0.8	7	0.5
30 or more hours	5	0.5	2	0.2	3	0.2

**How many individual class meetings have you skipped this semester?**

	2009		2010		2011	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
None	486	44.5	618	46.4	424	31.7
One	248	22.7	299	22.4	289	21.6
Two to three	251	23.0	284	21.3	380	28.4
Four to five	62	5.7	94	7.1	151	11.3
Six to nine	32	2.9	26	2.0	71	5.3
10 or more	14	1.3	11	0.8	24	1.8

**Importance of sense of belonging or community at NC State?**

	2009		2010		2011*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not at all important	20	1.8	26	1.9	32	2.4
Slightly important	94	8.7	83	6.2	170	12.8
Moderately important	356	32.8	414	31.0	499	37.5
Very important	616	56.7	811	60.8	328	47.3

\*In the 2011 survey, this question was asked as part of a series of three questions about the importance of a sense of belonging and community. The other two related questions are below.

**Importance of sense of belonging or community in formal organizations?  
(2011 survey only)**

	2011	
	N	%
Not at all important	55	4.1
Slightly important	222	16.6
Moderately important	541	40.6
Very important	516	38.7

**Importance of sense of belonging or community in small groups?  
(2011 survey only)**

	2011	
	N	%
Not at all important	13	1.0
Slightly important	68	5.1
Moderately important	333	25.0
Very important	916	68.9

**Extent to which you experience a sense of belonging/community at NC State?**

	2009		2010		2011*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Not at all	34	3.1	38	2.8	54	4.5
A little	160	14.6	167	12.5	216	17.8
Some	519	47.4	577	43.1	556	45.8
A great deal	382	34.9	556	41.6	387	31.9

\*In the 2011 survey, this question was asked as part of a series of three questions about experiencing a sense of belonging and community. The other two related questions are below.

**Extent to which you experience a sense of belonging/community in formal organizations?  
(2011 survey only)**

	2011	
	N	%
Not at all	123	10.1
A little	211	17.3
Some	519	42.6
A great deal	365	30.0

**Extent to which you experience a sense of belonging/community in small groups?  
(2011 survey only)**

	2011	
	N	%
Not at all	36	3.0
A little	112	9.3
Some	390	32.2
A great deal	672	55.5

**How confident are you in your ability to:**

		Not at all confident		Not very confident		Somewhat confident		Very confident	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Find way around campus	2009	3	0.3%	15	1.4%	414	37.7%	665	60.6%
	2010	2	0.1%	9	0.7%	522	38.9%	809	60.3%
	2011	4	0.3%	13	1.0%	379	28.2%	948	70.5%
Cope with stress by identifying and implementing healthy stress relief strategies	2009	12	1.1%	97	8.8%	498	45.4%	490	44.7%
	2010	16	1.2%	128	9.6%	658	49.2%	536	40.1%
	2011	33	2.5%	161	12.0%	648	48.2%	503	37.4%
Relieve or reduce homesickness	2009	20	1.8%	53	4.8%	352	32.1%	672	61.3%
	2010	12	0.9%	76	5.7%	481	35.9%	769	57.5%
	2011	36	2.7%	85	6.3%	397	29.6%	824	61.4%
Effectively manage your time	2009	29	2.6%	145	13.2%	545	49.7%	377	34.4%
	2010	14	1.0%	164	12.3%	725	54.2%	435	32.5%
	2011	34	2.5%	218	16.3%	723	54.1%	361	27.0%
Identify at least one campus resource for academic support	2009	10	0.9%	97	8.9%	425	39.0%	559	51.2%
	2010	14	1.0%	109	8.2%	538	40.3%	675	50.5%
	2011	23	1.7%	113	8.4%	446	33.3%	757	56.5%
Identify at least one activity/ group on campus in which you might like to get involved	2009	14	1.3%	53	4.8%	354	32.4%	672	61.5%
	2010	14	1.0%	76	5.7%	392	29.4%	853	63.9%
	2011	16	1.2%	79	5.9%	327	24.4%	920	68.6%
Identify a group on campus that supports an identity important to you	2009	66	6.0%	172	15.8%	368	33.7%	485	44.5%
	2010	66	4.9%	180	13.5%	467	35.0%	621	46.6%
	2011	70	5.2%	202	15.1%	376	28.1%	692	51.6%

Since arriving at NC State how often have you:

		Never/Once in a While		Sometimes		Often/Constantly	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Felt lonely	2009	681	62.1%	254	23.2%	161	14.7%
	2010	856	63.7%	295	22.0%	192	14.3%
	2011	775	57.8%	368	27.5%	197	14.7%
Felt homesick	2009	777	71.1%	202	18.5%	114	10.4%
	2010	943	70.3%	266	19.8%	132	9.8%
	2011	928	69.4%	250	18.7%	159	11.9%
Felt depressed	2009	832	76.1%	165	15.1%	97	8.9%
	2010	1062	79.3%	177	13.2%	101	7.5%
	2011	1007	75.4%	215	16.1%	113	8.5%
Felt overwhelmed	2009	468	42.7%	349	31.9%	278	25.4%
	2010	553	41.2%	462	34.4%	328	24.4%
	2011	413	30.9%	481	35.9%	444	33.2%
Felt bored	2009	583	53.2%	320	29.2%	192	17.5%
	2010	761	56.7%	417	31.0%	165	12.3%
	2011	757	56.5%	378	28.2%	205	15.3%
Felt concerned about financial issues	2009	656	59.9%	229	20.9%	210	19.2%
	2010	777	57.9%	305	22.7%	260	19.4%
	2011	604	45.0%	317	23.6%	420	31.3%
Felt academically underprepared	2009	685	62.5%	260	23.7%	151	13.8%
	2010	817	61.0%	364	27.2%	159	11.9%
	2011	686	51.1%	435	32.4%	221	16.5%
Felt concerned about family issues	2009	783	71.6%	186	17.0%	124	11.3%
	2010	966	72.1%	240	17.9%	134	10.0%
	2011	886	66.1%	231	17.2%	224	16.7%
Felt that NC State is not a good fit	2009	882	80.5%	112	10.2%	102	9.3%
	2010	1129	84.1%	120	8.9%	93	6.9%
	2011	1137	84.7%	104	7.7%	101	7.5%



**To what extent have you done each of the following during your time thus far at NC State?**

		Not applicable*		Not at all		A little		Some		A great deal	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Made friends with other students	2009			17	1.6%	160	14.7%	329	30.2%	584	53.6%
	2010			16	1.2%	179	13.4%	400	30.0%	737	55.3%
	2011	2	0.1%	18	1.3%	184	13.7%	462	34.4%	678	50.4%
Used upper-class students to learn about campus/activities	2009			216	19.8%	273	25.1%	320	29.4%	280	25.7%
	2010			243	18.2%	325	24.3%	425	31.8%	342	25.6%
	2011	27	2.0%	199	14.8%	303	22.6%	424	31.6%	390	29.0%
Gotten involved in campus activities	2009			125	11.5%	264	24.2%	355	32.6%	345	31.7%
	2010			112	8.4%	306	22.9%	453	34.0%	463	34.7%
	2011	20	1.5%	104	7.7%	251	18.7%	447	33.3%	522	38.8%
Developed a relationship with a faculty member	2009			369	33.8%	398	36.5%	227	20.8%	97	8.9%
	2010			473	35.5%	452	33.9%	274	20.6%	133	10.0%
	2011	25	1.9%	422	31.4%	425	31.7%	307	22.9%	163	12.1%
Developed a relationship with a staff member	2009			453	41.5%	373	34.2%	177	16.2%	89	8.2%
	2010			567	42.6%	405	30.5%	239	18.0%	119	8.9%
	2011	41	3.1%	427	31.8%	362	27.0%	317	23.6%	194	14.5%
Sought out academic assistance for help with school work	2009	62	5.7%	245	22.5%	301	27.7%	295	27.1%	184	16.9%
	2010	61	4.6%	266	19.9%	364	27.2%	393	29.4%	252	18.9%
	2011	34	2.5%	251	18.7%	319	23.8%	431	32.1%	308	22.9%

**\*"Not applicable" was not given as an answer choice in the 2009 and 2010 surveys.**