



UCLA Graduating Senior Survey: A Briefing on Transfer Students

Executive Summary

Transfer student respondents to the 2005 UCLA Senior Survey comprised forty-four percent of the total respondent pool on the 2005 Senior Survey. Overall, a greater number of female students than males responded to the 2005 Senior Survey. The percentage of female respondents was similar among transfer and direct students. The most represented ethnic groups among the transfer student respondents are White/Caucasian, Chicano/Mexican and Chinese.

Transfer and direct students report similar opinions about most of their academic experiences. Differences arose in a few areas, however. Transfer students met with instructors and TAs more often and exchanged e-mail with faculty more often than direct students.

Transfer students find the UCLA campus to be a place where political, religious, and sexual orientation issues are respected. However, these students tend to have less conversational engagement with students of diverse backgrounds when compared with direct students. Transfer students also report attending fewer celebrations of cultural heritage, other than their own.

Introduction

This briefing, one of a series developed by the Student Affairs Information and Research Office (SAIRO) is based upon the results of the 2005 UCLA Senior Survey. The purpose of these briefings is to provide special insight about certain sub-populations of UCLA students.

This report compares **transfer** and direct students at the end of their undergraduate careers. Specifically, this report focuses on the co-curricular experiences, goals, and impressions of the UCLA campus culture of these two groups of students.

Data Source

In May 2005, all seniors in the UCLA College of Letters and Science were asked to complete a survey that explored the views of students about their lives on campus, their studies, and their plans after graduating. The result was the most comprehensive survey of seniors ever accomplished at UCLA, with over 5,800 seniors responding, a response rate of at least 80%. The responses explore views about the overall UCLA experience, student and campus life, academic majors and minors, the quality of faculty and courses, and research opportunities for undergraduates.

Background Characteristics of Survey Respondents

Transfer students represented 44.1% of the total respondents (5,871 individuals) of the 2005 Senior Survey. A comparison of the racial and ethnic composition of international and domestic students appears in Table 1. The ethnic breakdowns of transfer and direct students are quite comparable. The largest category for transfer

students was White/ Caucasian (37%), followed by Chicano/Mexican (13%) and Chinese (12%), and while the largest ethnic category for direct students was White (31%) followed by Chinese (16.2%) and Chicano/Mexican (11.1%). There is a slight over-representation among White males in the sample of both transfer and direct students (37% and 31%).

Table 1. Distribution of Race/Ethnicity by Entry Status

	Percent		
	Transfer ^a (n=2,590)	Direct (n=3,281)	Difference
White/ Caucasian	37	31	6
Chicano/ Mexican	13	11	2
Japanese	4	3	1
Latino/ Other Spanish	5	4	1
Pilipino/ Filipino	0	0	0
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	0.5	0.4	0
Black/African American	3	4	-1
East Indian/ Pakistani	2	3	-1
Korean	7	8	-1
Thai/ Other Asian	2	3	-1
Pacific Islander	3	5	-2
Vietnamese	3	5	-3
Missing	1	5	-3
Chinese	12	16	-4
Other	4	2	2
Declined to state	2	0	2

Notes: ^adata on transfer grades were calculated for those students who transferred to UCLA

(N=2,591).

Female students represented 62% of the transfer student respondents, while males represent 38%. This breakdown is comparable to the direct student population and is representative of the total respondent of the survey .63% (3,715 respondents) of the total respondents to the 2005 Senior Survey while male students comprised 37% (2,156 respondents) of the sample. Additionally, 9% of transfer student respondents indicated that they were international students, as opposed to 1% of direct students.

Table 2. Gender and International Status

	Percent		
	Transfer (n=2,590)	Direct (n=3,281)	Difference
Distribution of Gender			
Female	62	64	-2
Male	38	36	2
Distribution of International Status			
Yes	9	1	8
No	91	99	-8

Academics

The 2005 Senior Survey contains over 60 items that measure aspects of the student academic experience. For this report SAIRO analysts selected a subset of 8 key items to analyze.

Similar percentages among transfer and direct students reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their overall academic experience at UCLA (92% vs. 91%). Transfer student respondents, however, showed significant differences in the frequency with which they participated in several academic activities. More transfer students met with faculty and TAs during office hours than direct students. Additionally, more transfer students exchanged e-mail with faculty but did not exchange e-mail with TAs more frequently. Table 2 illustrates these differential distributions across the four survey items.

Table 3. Academic Interaction (Q11)

	Percent of students who reported "often" or "very often"		
	Transfer (n=2,590)	Direct (n=3,281)	Difference
Higher for Transfer Students			
Met with faculty	28	22	6**
Met with T.A.	37	34	3
Exchanged e-mail with faculty	37	34	3
Lower for Transfer Students			
Exchanged e-mail with T.A.	36	38	-2

Notes: * Moderate statistical significance ($p \leq .05$); **High statistical significance ($p \leq .01$)

^aRespondents include only those students who completed their general education at UCLA (N=5,871); Transfer=2,590; Direct=3,281).

Transfer students responded similarly to direct students on measures of academic enthusiasm. There were no statistical differences between transfer and direct students in their enjoyment of exploring topics and interests outside their major; whether or not they felt challenge by new ideas and new ways of thinking; whether or not they did more work than required for a course they found interesting; and their overall academic experience at UCLA.

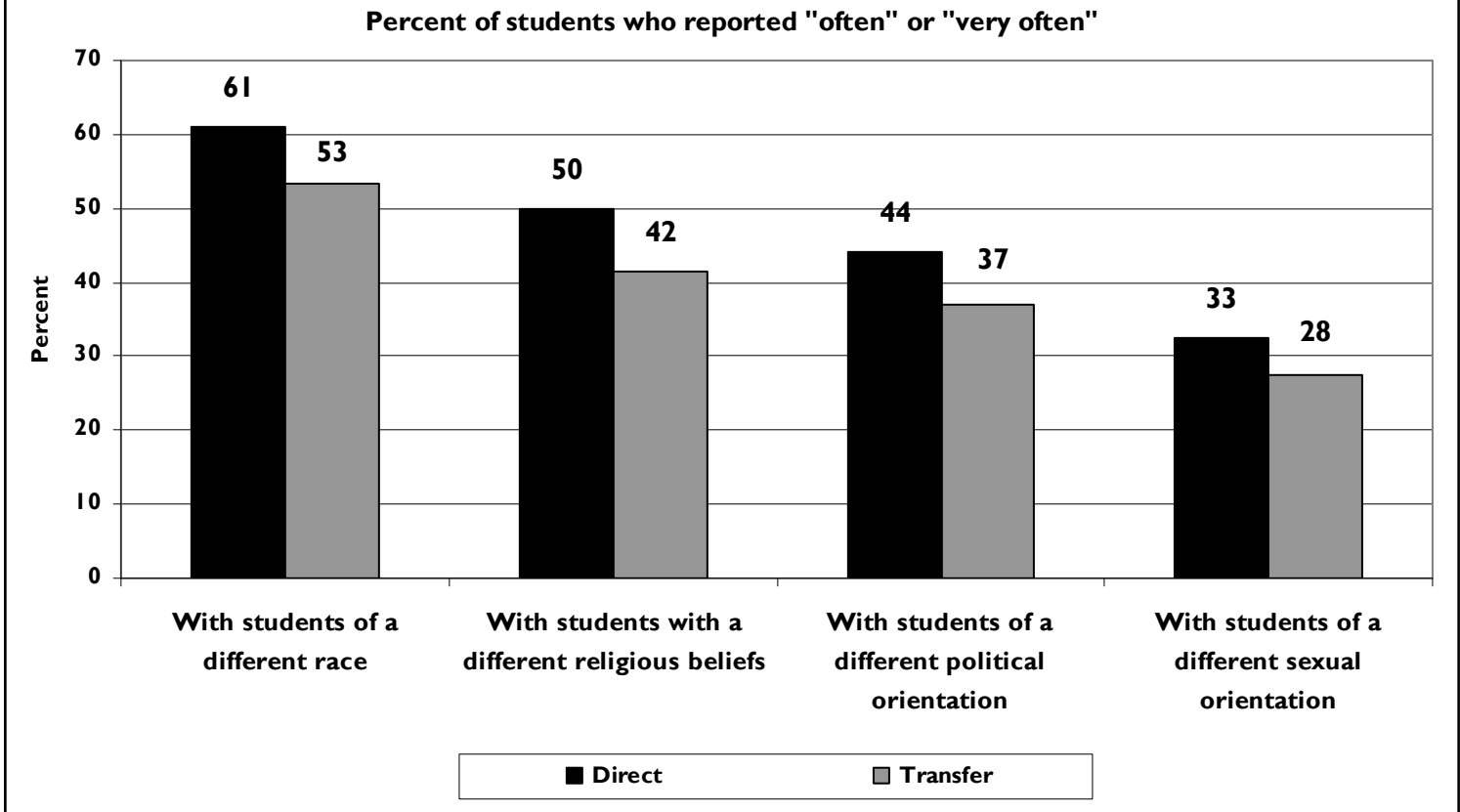
Co-curricular Experience

Items where students rated their cross-cultural experiences with students different from themselves were analyzed to note any statistically significant differences between transfer students and their direct counterparts. Thirteen items were chosen for further analysis between transfer and direct students.

Overall, both transfer and direct students reported high levels of satisfaction (either satisfied or very satisfied) of student and campus life at UCLA (87% vs. 91%). Most transfer students reported having fewer in-depth conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity, different political opinions, different religious belief, and with students whose sexual orientation was different from their own. The comparative distributions for these items are shown in Figure 1.

Figure I. Engagement in In-Depth Conversations

(Q17 2005 UCLA Senior Survey; N=5,871)



Transfer students are also less likely to “attend a celebration of a cultural heritage other than (their) own” often or very often. There is a statistically significant difference between the percentage of transfer student respondents and those from direct students (15% vs. 28%).

Perceptions of Campus Climate

The items that asked students to rate their UCLA experiences holistically (overall UCLA student and campus life, and overall UCLA experience) showed no significant differences between the two groups. However, transfer students showed significantly *greater* agreement with the items “students of different political beliefs are equally respected here,” and “students of all races and ethnicities are equally respected here.” Transfer students showed a significantly *weaker* agreement with “I feel part of this campus community.” Figure 3 illustrates these differential distributions across the three survey items.

Student Service Utilization

Transfer students indicated greater utilization of the Office of International Students and Scholars (10% vs. 3%), Student Loan Services (34% vs. 28%), the Financial Aid Office (65% vs. 60%). These differences have high statistical significance. Transfer students may have greater financial concerns with college, as expressed with greater utilization of these specific student services. Given that fewer transfer students live in residential housing, it is not surprisingly that a significant proportion of transfer students do not utilize the Office of Residential life (13% vs. 51%).

Other statistically significant differences in student service utilization indicate that transfer students use the Center for Student Programming (8% vs. 17%) and Fraternity and Sorority Relations (6% vs. 17%) *less* frequently than their peers. This confirms other research that indicates that transfer students are less involved in co-curricular activities. In addition, transfer students are less frequently utilized the Community Programs Office (9% vs. 13%) and the Career Center (47% vs. 64%). Other statistically significant differences of students' utilizations are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Student Service Utilization by Entry Status

	Percent		
	Transfer (n=2,590)	Direct (n=3,281)	Difference
Percentages larger for transfer students			
Office of International Students & Scholars	10	3	7**
Student Loan Services	34	28	6**
Financial Aid Office	65	60	5**
Areas with similar percentages			
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Resource Center	3	3	0
Dean of Students Office	8	8	0
Student Psychological Services	14	15	-1
Student Legal Services	5	7	-2*
Percentages smaller for transfer students			
Center for Women and Men	7	10	-3**
Office of Students with Disabilities	11	14	-3*
Community Programs Office	9	13	-4**
Center for Student Programming	8	17	-9**
Fraternity and Sorority Relations	6	17	-11**
Career Center	47	64	-17**
Ashe Student Health and Wellness Center	65	83	-18**
John Wooden Center Fitness Classes	67	86	-19**
Office of Residential Life	13	51	-38**

Notes: * Moderate statistical significance ($p \leq .05$); **High statistical significance ($p \leq .01$)

^aRespondents include only those students who completed their general education at UCLA (N=5,871); Transfer=2,590; Direct=3,281).