

Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2006 Research Methodology

The Evergreen Student Experience Survey provides an opportunity to assess students' experiences at The Evergreen State College. The survey is administered every two years by The Evergreen State College Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. This report focuses on the research methodology for the 2006 administration of the survey. More information about this and other administrations of the survey are available on the Institutional Research and Assessment website: www.evergreen.edu/institutionalresearch.

The Evergreen Student Experience Survey is an integral part of Evergreen's assessment plan because it has questions that are specific to Evergreen's unique structure and learning environment. The survey was designed to provide information that is useful campus-wide and accessible to students, administrators and faculty. The results of the survey provide information about:

- Students' satisfaction with elements of Evergreen's learning environment;
- Students' perception of Evergreen's contribution to their growth in various skill areas;
- Students' goals for their college experience;
- Students' level of confidence;
- Students' utilization of campus resources and participation in community activities;
- Demographics that are not available through the BANNER data system
- And answers to other questions about students' experiences at Evergreen.

The Evergreen Student Experience Survey is a part of a larger longitudinal effort to provide information that is useful in assessing and improving Evergreen's academic environment, in improving student support services, and in institutional planning. The Evergreen Student Experience Survey was designed along with the Evergreen New Student Survey; both of these surveys are administered every two years and have questions that can be compared for students who filled out both the beginning-of-the-year Evergreen New Student Survey and the end-of-the-year Evergreen Student Experience Survey. Some items also correspond to the biennial Evergreen Alumni Survey, which provides an opportunity to assess student experiences from entry to the College through life after Evergreen.

Sampling Method

The Evergreen Student Experience Survey was designed as a stratified random sample survey of Evergreen degree-seeking undergraduates. In addition, all members of certain student subgroups were surveyed -- all respondents to the New Student Survey 2005 and all students in the Tribal: Reservation-based/Community-determined programs. A sample of 1,200 from the Evergreen undergraduate population was drawn first. This sample was stratified by class standing so that the sample was representative of the proportion of students in each class standing (Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors).

Total number of students in undergraduate population by class standing, percent of population and total number of students in sample

	Total in population (N)	Total in Sample (N)*	Percent of Population and Sample within each Class Standing Strata
Freshmen	490	156	13%
Sophomores	701	228	19%
Juniors	1,154	372	31%
Seniors	1,352	444	37%
Total	3,697**	1,200	100%

* The number of students in the sample within each class standing "strata" are based on the proportion of students in each class standing in the undergraduate population.

** Post-baccalaureate students were excluded in this research.

Those students enrolled spring quarter 2006 who were not randomly selected in the sample and who had participated in the New Student Survey 2005 were also asked to participate in the survey. In this way, all respondents to the Evergreen New Student Survey 2005 would have a chance to participate in the Evergreen Student Experience Survey. This enhanced the ability to do longitudinal analyses of the responses of new students during their first year at Evergreen.

All students enrolled in the Tribal: Reservation-based/Community-determined programs during spring quarter 2006 were also asked to participate in the survey, whether they had been selected in the stratified random sample of all Evergreen undergraduates or not. This was done for the purpose of conducting an assessment that was specific to those programs.

The total number of undergraduates asked to participate in the Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2006 was 1,742. Of those, 1,200 were in the stratified random sample. A total of 519 additional students who were not randomly drawn in the sample were surveyed because they responded to the Evergreen New Student Survey 2005. An additional 23 students were surveyed because they were enrolled in Tribal programs but had not been selected in the random sample or as New Student Survey 2005 respondents.

Methods of Contacting Students

Students who had a valid e-mail address were contacted first via e-mail. Both the students' preferred e-mail address, which they had reported to Evergreen, and their assigned college (evergreen.edu) e-mail address were used. The e-mails had a link to the web survey. Those who did not respond to the survey via web were sent a copy of the survey in the mail. Students who were enrolled in the Tribal: Reservation-based/Community-determined programs were also asked to participate in the survey during a proctored session. Two reminder e-mails and a reminder letter were sent to those students who had not completed the survey.

Student Responses Rates and Methods of Response

Overall, there were 657 responses to the Evergreen Student Experience Survey, representing about 18% of the total degree-seeking undergraduate population spring quarter. There was only one student who appeared to be unreachable, with no valid preferred or campus e-mail address, no valid mailing address, and who was not included in the proctored session for students enrolled in a Tribal: Reservation-based program. Taking out one un-reachable student, 657 out of 1741 students responded, giving an overall response rate of 37.8%. The chart below shows response rates separately for the random sample, the sample of all enrolled students in the Tribal programs, and the sample of all respondents to the Evergreen New Student Survey 2005.

Response Rates by Sample Types

Sample Type	Number of Respondents*	Number in Sample	Response Rate
Students in Random Sample	429	1199**	35.8%
Students enrolled in Tribal: Reservation-based/Community-determined Programs	29	44	65.9%
Students who responded to the Evergreen New Student Survey 2005	308	748	41.2%

* Numbers of respondents add up to more than 657 respondents, since some students are in more than one sample type.

** Does not include one student who was not reachable.

Of the total number of students responding, 450 responded via the web (68.5% of respondents), 186 responded by mailing paper surveys (28.3% of respondents), and 21 surveys were completed during a proctored session for Tribal: Reservation-based/Community-determined students (3.2% of respondents). Four students refused to participate in the survey.

Student Response Reports

Students' responses were analyzed by the type of student and location of study. The Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2006 has been analyzed by subgroups in the following ways:

- Responses of students studying on the Olympia campus who were selected in the random sample (N=386).
- Responses of students studying in the Tribal programs (N=29)
- Responses of students studying at the Tacoma campus who were selected in the random sample (N=39)
- Responses of all first-time, first-year respondents who were new in Fall 2005 (N=117)
- Responses compared between surveys for students who responded both to the Evergreen New Student Survey 2005 and Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2006 (N=308 first-time, first-years and transfer students)
- More analysis will be conducted on an as-needed basis.

The number of students listed above does not add up to 657, since some students are in multiple subgroups.

Only a few items have been calculated using institution-wide sample response in recognition of the unique learning environments of Evergreen's different locations (Olympia Campus, Tribal Programs, Tacoma Center, and Grays Harbor Programs). Most responses were best analyzed by subgroup, with students responding from the Olympia, Tacoma, and Tribal: Reservation-based/Community-determined programs analyzed and reported separately.

Tests regarding the representativeness of respondents to the population of students are reported within the separate reports listed above.

Final Notes: Explanation of Past and Future Sampling Methods

The sampling method evolved from the original method employed on the Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2004, which was to select those students who had responded to the New Student Survey 2005 and to add in a sample of students that were stratified by class standing up to a total sample size of 2,000. Responses then were then reported for all respondents together.

In the Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2006, the sampling method was revised so that the stratified random sample of 1,200 was drawn first, then additional students were selected to increase statistical power for targeted subgroup analyses. Because responses to the Evergreen Student Experience Survey are best understood when they are separated by location, the sampling method will most likely be revised for the Evergreen Student Experience Survey 2008. This will likely be a random sample of *Olympia-only students* stratified by class-standing, along with separate samples (potentially samples that are 100% of the population) from other Evergreen locations.