

FHSU Freshmen Survey 2001

Executive Summary



**EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY:**

**A BROAD AND
USUALLY BRIEF
ABSTRACT OF
CONCISE
STATEMENTS TO
BE MORE FULLY
CONSIDERED AT
A LATER TIME OR**

The specific objectives of the survey include:

- \$ Determine the general population size of the high schools that incoming freshmen students attended.
- \$ Determine the home county of incoming freshmen students.
- \$ Assess the importance of various factors that may have contributed to a student's desire to attend Fort Hays State University.
- \$ Determine other universities and colleges that students considered attending.
- \$ Assess opinions about why students "ultimately" decided to attend FHSU.
- \$ Determine the incoming students' major field of study.
- \$ Assess the ways in which students obtained information about FHSU and the usefulness of each.
- \$ Assess what students like best about FHSU.
- \$ Determine the gender of each incoming freshmen student.

From analysis of survey results, we find that:

- \$ Most (34.8%) of the incoming freshmen students attended high schools with populations above 400 students. 25% of the respondents report attending high schools with populations between 200 and 400 students.



- \$ 16.8% of the incoming students are from Ellis County, while 4.5% list Barton as their home county.
- \$ When asked about choosing a university, 62.9% of the respondents feel that the “quality of academic programs” is a “Very Important.” 57.5% of respondents indicate that “success of graduates finding jobs” is also “Very Important.”
- \$ The university/college other than FHSU most often considered by incoming students was Kansas State University at 58.7%, followed by the University of Kansas at 44.1%.
- \$ The reasons most often given that helped students “ultimately” decided to FHSU are that the university is “close to home” and is “less expensive than other schools.”
- \$ Most (about 36%) of the incoming students listed one or more of the majors offered from the College of Arts and Sciences as their proposed major field of study. The individual major most often cited was business at about 9%.
- \$ Most students listed “printed material from FHSU” as “Very Useful” (at 75.6%). The FHSU website was also very popular with 68.5% of the incoming students indicating that it was “Very Useful.”
- \$ The items most often given by incoming students about what they “like best about FHSU” are “small class sizes” and “the size of the university.”
- \$ Most survey respondents were female (63.3%).

Methods

During Spring Semester 2001 incoming freshmen students were surveyed with a questionnaire developed by the Docking Institute's University Center for Survey Research. A total of 317 students completed and returned the survey.



METHODOLOGY:

**A SYSTEM OF
METHODS,
PRINCIPLES,
AND RULES, AS
THOSE OF AN
ART OR SCIENCE.**

The survey respondents are considered a convenience sample because students were not randomly sampled. Generalizing to the general population of incoming students is, therefore, tenuous. In addition, the respondents to the survey were participating in an open house event on the campus of Fort Hays State University. As such, the results are most likely skewed towards those respondents from in and around the Hays area. This means, however, that the results to this survey might be representative of the population of incoming freshmen students that are from in and around Hays.

This report provides univariate analysis of the data collected in the survey. The percentages shown in this report are valid percentages (with non-responses removed) unless otherwise specified.

Survey Instrument

The instrument used for this research project contains 9 survey items. The survey instrument along with relative frequency distributions and percentages of survey items, as well as, responses to open ended questions are provided in the Appendix.



SURVEY:

**A SAMPLING OF
FACTS, FIGURES,
OR OPINIONS
TAKEN AND USED
TO APPROXIMATE
WHAT A COMPLETE
COLLECTION AND
ANALYSIS MIGHT
REVEAL.**

Sample Demographics

Sixty-three percent of the survey respondents are female and about 36% are male. Most list their home counties as Ellis County (16.8%). Barton County is the next most popular at 4.5%.

Most (34.8%) students attend high schools with more than 400 students. Twenty-five percent of the respondents report attending high schools with populations between 200 and 400 students. Figure 1 shows the results to the questions about general population size of high school.

Important factors in attending Fort Hays State University



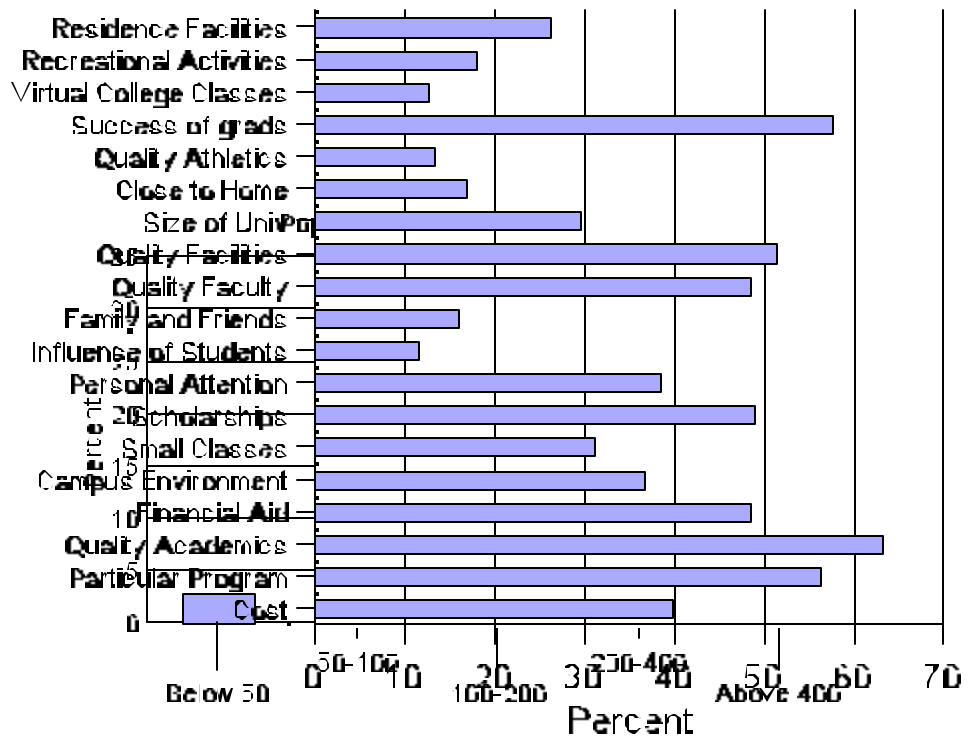
UCSR FACTOID:

63% OF INCOMING FRESHMEN RESPONDENTS CONSIDER THE QUALITY OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS TO THE "VERY IMPORTANT."

Respondents were asked to indicate how important various factors were in choosing a university. Options included cost, academic programs, influence of family and friends, quality of faculty, and many other items. Respondents were asked to indicate if each item was "Very Unimportant," "Somewhat Unimportant," "Somewhat Important," or "Very Important."

Figure 2 shows the percentages of those items that students indicated as "Very Important." As can be seen in Figure 2, about 63% of the respondents feel that the "quality of

Figure 2
Very Important Factors



academic programs” is a “Very Important.” The next most important factor (at 58%) is the “success of graduates finding jobs.” The third most often cited reason is the availability of “a particular academic program” at 56%.

The “quality of faculty” at FHSU is also considered “Very Important” for many students, as is the “quality of facilities,” and the “availability of financial aid” and the “amount received for scholarships.”

The percentages presented in Figure 2 are for “Very Important” factors only. The percentages of all of the answer options are presented in the Appendix.

Other Universities and Colleges Considered



Respondents were asked to specify other universities and colleges that they had considered attending. Figure 3 shows the percentages of those schools that incoming freshmen students considered attending from a list of specific options.

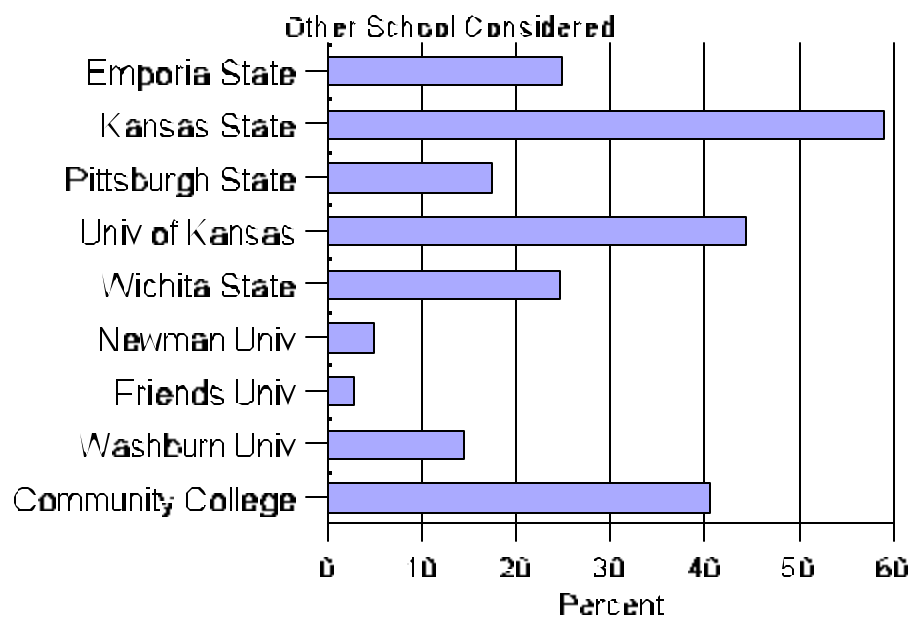
The figure shows that 58.7% of the respondents also considered Kansas State University. The next most popular school was the University of Kansas.

UCSR FACTOID:

**58.7% OF
FRESHMEN
RESPONDENTS
ALSO CONSIDERED
ATTENDING
KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY.**

The Appendix shows the responses the open ended questions asking about private schools and other institutes of higher learning that students also considered attending.

Figure 3



Ultimate Decision Maker



Question 6 of the survey asked respondents to indicate why they “ultimately” chose Fort Hays State University. The responses to this open-ended question are shown in the Appendix.

Preliminary analysis of the results suggest that major reasons are that Fort Hays State University is “close to home” and is “less expensive than other schools.” In addition, the university offers “small class sizes” and students are drawn to specific “program offerings.”

UCSR FACTOID:

**MOST INCOMING
FRESHMEN
RESPONDENTS
INDICATE THAT
THEY CHOSE
FHSU BECAUSE IT
WAS CLOSE TO
HOME.**

Major Field of Study

Respondents were also asked to indicate their chosen major field of study. The responses to this open-ended question are shown in the Appendix.

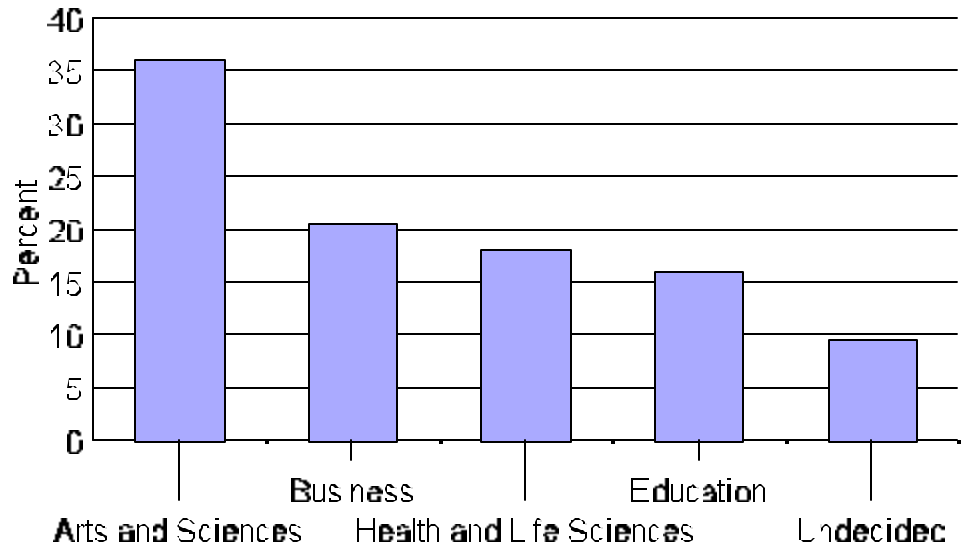


UCSR FACTOID:
MOST INCOMING FRESHMEN RESPONDENTS INDICATE THAT THEY WILL STUDY A MAJOR FROM WITHIN THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES.

Most (about 36%) of the incoming students list one or more of the majors offered by the College of Arts and Sciences as their proposed major field of study. However, the individual major/department most often cited is business with about 9%. An additional 9% of the respondents are undecided about their proposed major.

Figure 4 presents these answers grouped into the four academic colleges (along with the “Undecideds”). Figures 5 and 6 show the percentages of the most often mentioned

Figure 4
Academic College of Choice



majors/academic departments.

Figure 5
Most Often Mentioned Departments

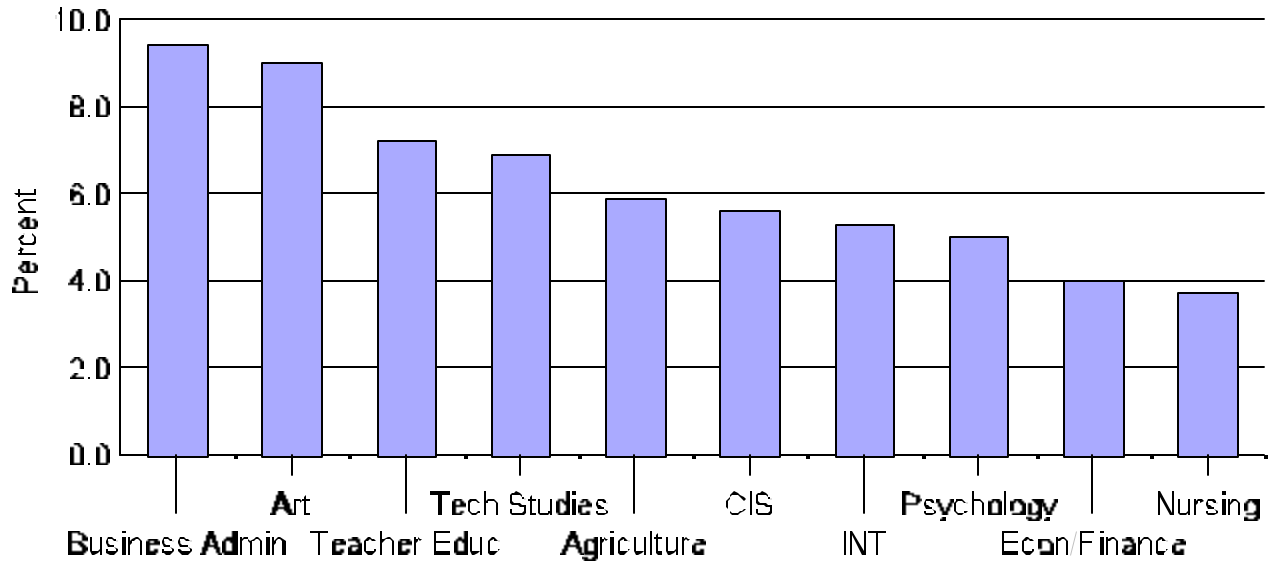
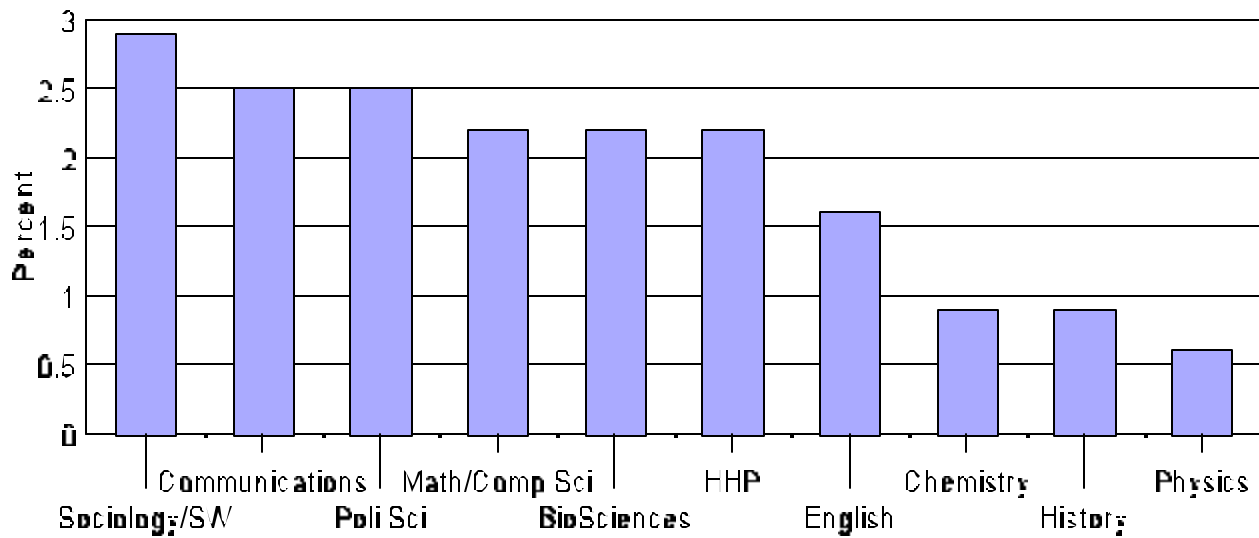


Figure 6
Next Most Often Mentioned Departments



Information About FHSU



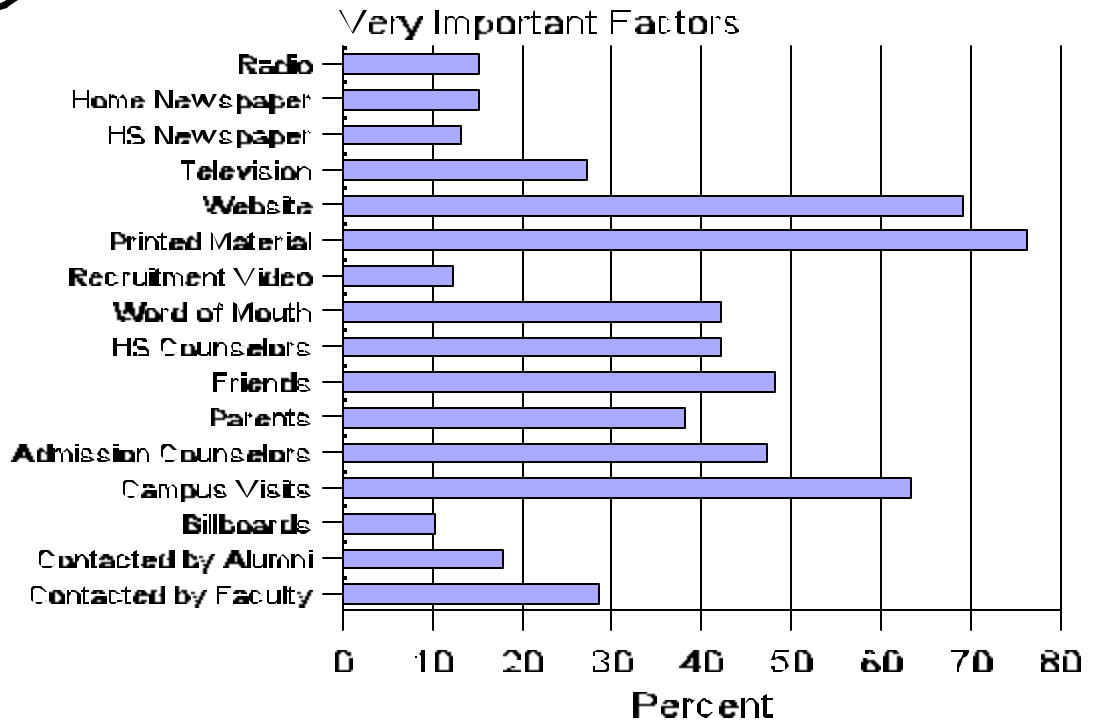
Respondents were asked to rate the various ways in which they may have heard about FHSU as “Not Useful,” “Somewhat Useful,” and “Very Useful.” Figure 7 shows the percentages of those ways that were considered “Very Useful.”

Most incoming students list “printed material from FHSU” as “Very Useful” (at 75.6%), while 68.5% feel that the FHSU website is also “Very Useful.” The Appendix shows the results of all of the answer options.

UCSR FACTOID:

**75.6% OF
RESPONDENTS
FOUND PRINTED
MATERIAL FROM
FHSU “VERY
USEFUL.”**

Figure 7



Like Best About FHSU

Respondents were also asked to indicate what they liked best about Fort Hays State University. The responses to this open-ended question are shown in the Appendix.



Preliminary analysis of the results suggest that many incoming freshmen like the “small class sizes” offered by the university.

Respondents also like the “size of the university,” “it’s location,” and the “friendly atmosphere and environment.”

UCSR FACTOID:

**MANY INCOMING
FRESHMEN
RESPONDENTS
SUGGEST THAT
THEY LIKE THE
SMALL CLASS
SIZES OFFERED AT
FHSU.**