

TRANSFER STUDENT SURVEY - FALL 2003

LINDA J. WHAM

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH ANALYST

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY-BILLINGS

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TRANSFER STUDENT SURVEY – FALL 2003

Introduction

The study was commissioned by Curt Kochner, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. The survey instrument was a replication of a survey completed for Fall 2002 transfer students. Due to the success of the Web-based survey conducted last year the same method was used for this cycle. A survey along with a postage paid return envelop was mailed to students who had no email address in the Banner system. A copy of the survey is included as Appendix A.

Montana State University-Billings Methodology

Students currently have the option to include an email address in the Banner system. A total of 382 first time transfer students were identified in Banner for Fall Semester 2003. This includes all undergraduate and graduate transfer students at the Senior campus as well as the College of Technology. 316 students had an email address in Banner. 29 email addresses were returned as undeliverable. The Office of Student Affairs mailed copies of the survey to the students with undeliverable email addresses as well as the 66 students who had no email addresses in Banner. All 382 students were contacted.

A cover letter was authored by Curt Kochner (Appendix B). The survey was emailed and mailed to students on November 14, 2003. A reminder message was emailed to students who had not responded a week later. No follow-up message was sent to the students who were mailed the survey.

As of December 15, 2003 105 students responded to the survey.

- 12 surveys out of 95 were mailed back for a 13% response rate.
- 93 surveys out of 287 were emailed back for a 32% response rate.
- The total response rate is 27%, 105 responses for 382 student contacts.

The software product Survey View is the central management tool used to create the survey on the Web and also tabulate results. This product has limitations regarding multiple choice character length and question options but overall it is very effective for a concise survey. An analysis tool allows individuals to view instantaneous results on the Web at: <http://www.msubillings.edu/surveyadmin5/AnalysisTransferStudentSurvey.asp>

The Montana State University Banner Student team is developing an email and address update function on the Banner log in screen. This would provide up to date email addresses for further communiqué. The decision would involve all four units of the MSU system.

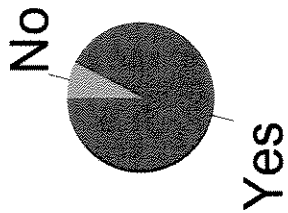
The survey was not intended to be anonymous. The first two questions asked for first and last names. Question 15 asked for additional comments. Students who had specific problems or concerns were identified and submitted to the Office of Student Affairs for resolution. A compilation of the survey results are reflected below:

Question 3: What major were you pursuing at your previous school?	
Number	Major
5	Associate of Arts
4	Accounting
1	Ag-Business
1	Agricultural Education (Broadfield Teaching)
1	Allied Health
1	Art
1	Associate of Science/Business Administration
1	Bachelor in Liberal Arts
3	Biology
1	BS Marketing, Masters of Business Administration
1	BSHS
4	Business
5	Business Administration
5	Business Management
1	child psychology
2	Communication
3	Computer Science
1	Computer Technology
1	Construction management
1	Dental assisting
1	Early Childhood Special Education
3	Education
9	Elementary Education
1	Engineering
1	English - Literature Option
1	English, PE
1	equine science
2	Exercise Science
1	Finance
1	Fire Science, Paramedic
3	General Studies
2	Health Promotions
3	History
1	Human Services
1	Information Technology
2	Journalism and Media
1	Law Enforcement
1	Liberal Arts
1	Marketing
1	Medical Assistant
1	Microcomputer support/Networking
1	Modern Languages and Literature
4	Nursing
1	Pharmacy Technician
1	Physical Education
2	Political Science
2	Pre Med
1	Pre-Pharmacy
1	Pre-Professional Law
1	Psychology
1	Radiologist Technician
1	Secondary Education
1	Social Sciences Broadfield/ Secondary ED
1	Sociology
1	Special Education Teacher
3	Undecided
103 Total Majors Submitted	

Montana State University-Billings
Data for Respondent Group - Transfer Student Survey

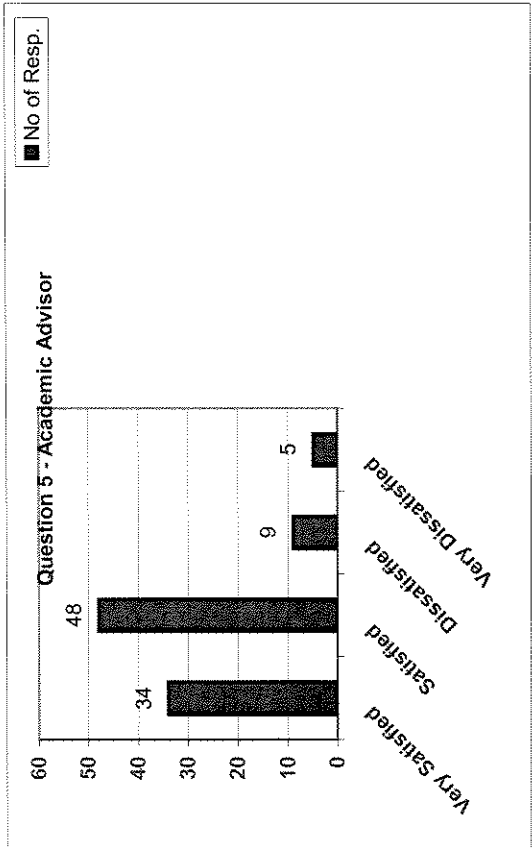
4. I visited with an academic advisor to develop a plan of study?

Yes	No	No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
96	8	104	92.3%	(+/-) 5.1%
			7.7%	(+/-) 5.1%



5. If yes, how satisfied were you with the help that you received from your academic advisor?

Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
48	34	9	5	96	35.4%	(+/-) 9.6%
				24	50.0%	(+/-) 10.0%
					9.4%	(+/-) 5.8%
					5.2%	(+/-) 4.4%



Very Satisfied
 Satisfied
 Dissatisfied
 Very Dissatisfied

No of Resp.
Mean

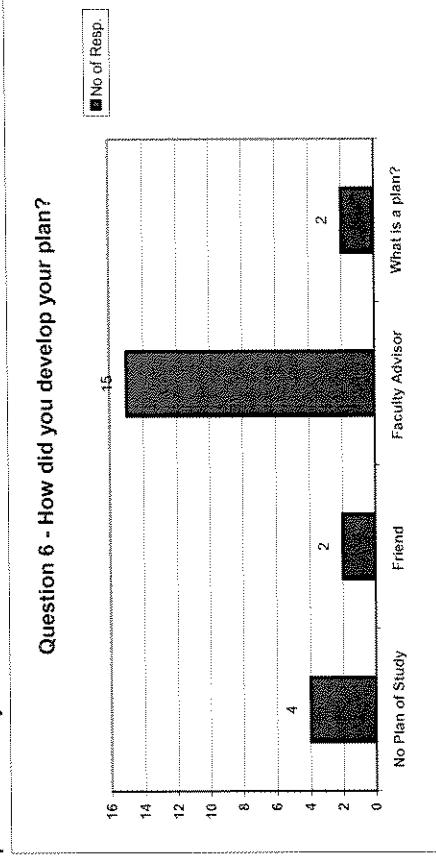
**Montana State University-Billings
Data for Respondent Group - Transfer Student Survey**

6. If no, how did you develop your plan of study at MSU-Billings?

I did not develop a plan of study.
I had a friend help me.
I talked with a faculty advisor in the Department to which I transferred.
What is a plan of study?

No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
4	17.4%	(+/-) 15.5%
2	8.7%	(+/-) 11.5%
15	65.2%	(+/-) 19.5%
2	8.7%	(+/-) 11.5%

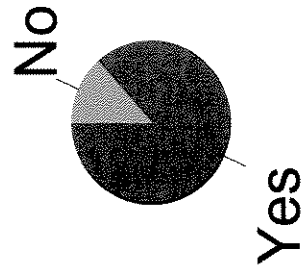
Question 6 - How did you develop your plan?



No of Resp. 23
Mean 5.8

7. Did your academic advisor complete a transcript evaluation to show how your transfer credits would apply to your major at MSU-Billings?

No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
90	86.5%	(+/-) 6.6%
14	13.5%	(+/-) 6.6%

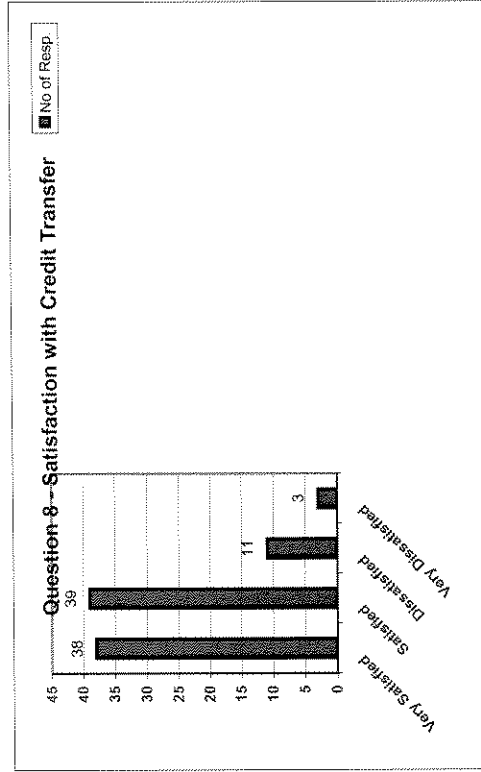


No of Resp. 104

Montana State University-Billings Data for Respondent Group - Transfer Student Survey

8. If yes, how satisfied were you with the way your credits transferred to MSU-Billings?

	No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
Very Satisfied	38	41.8%	(+/-) 10.1%
Satisfied	39	42.9%	(+/-) 10.2%
Dissatisfied	11	12.1%	(+/-) 6.7%
Very Dissatisfied	3	3.3%	(+/-) 3.7%

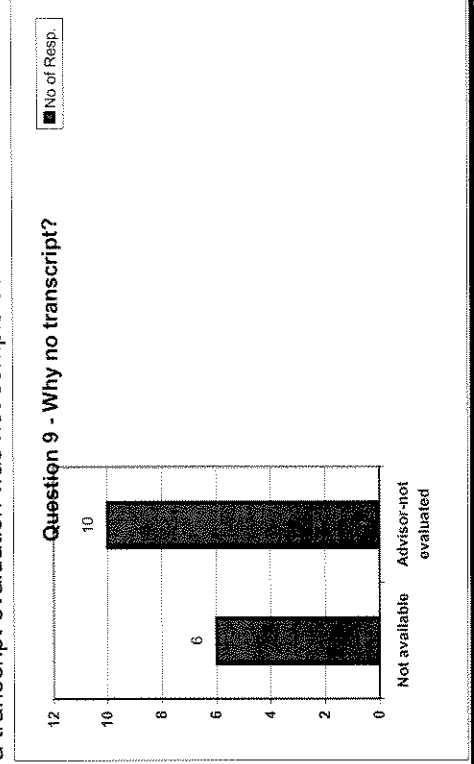


No of Resp. 91
Mean 22.8

9. If no, why was a transcript evaluation not completed?

	No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
I did not have transcripts available to evaluate.	6	37.5%	(+/-) 23.7%
I met with an advisor but a transcript evaluation was not completed.	10	62.5%	(+/-) 23.7%

I did not have transcripts available to evaluate.
I met with an advisor but a transcript evaluation was not completed.



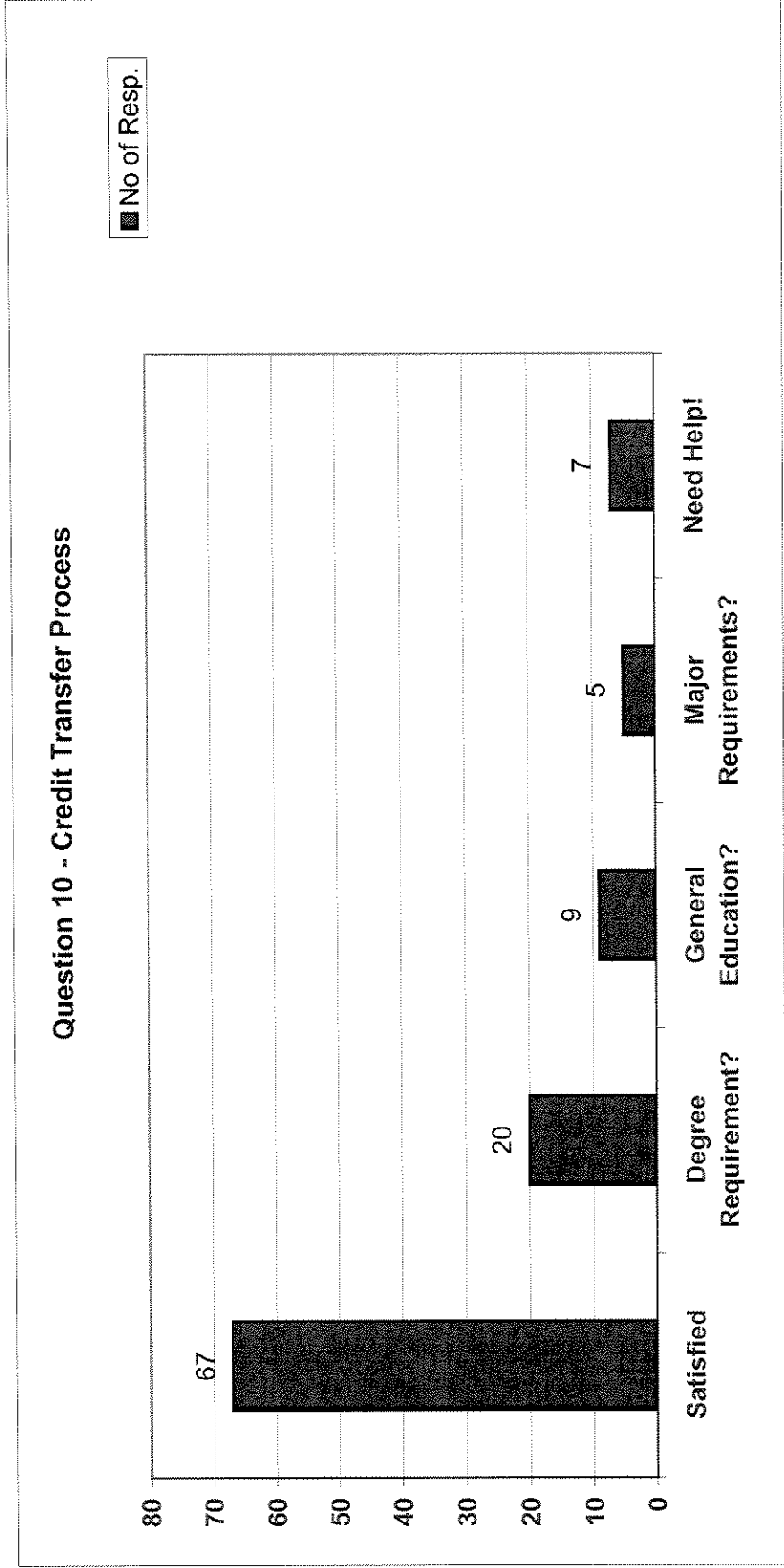
No of Resp. 16
Mean 8

**Montana State University-Billings
Data for Respondent Group - Transfer Student Survey**

10. What part of the credit transfer process do you/do you not understand? (Check all that apply.)

	No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
I understand all parts of the process, and I am very satisfied.	67	67.0%	(+/-) 9.2%
I don't understand why some of my credit can't be used to fulfill degree requirements.	20	20.0%	(+/-) 7.8%
I don't understand the part about General Education.	9	9.0%	(+/-) 5.6%
I don't understand the part about requirements for my major.	5	5.0%	(+/-) 4.3%
I don't understand any part and I need help.	7	7.0%	(+/-) 5.0%

No of Resp. 100
Mean 21.6

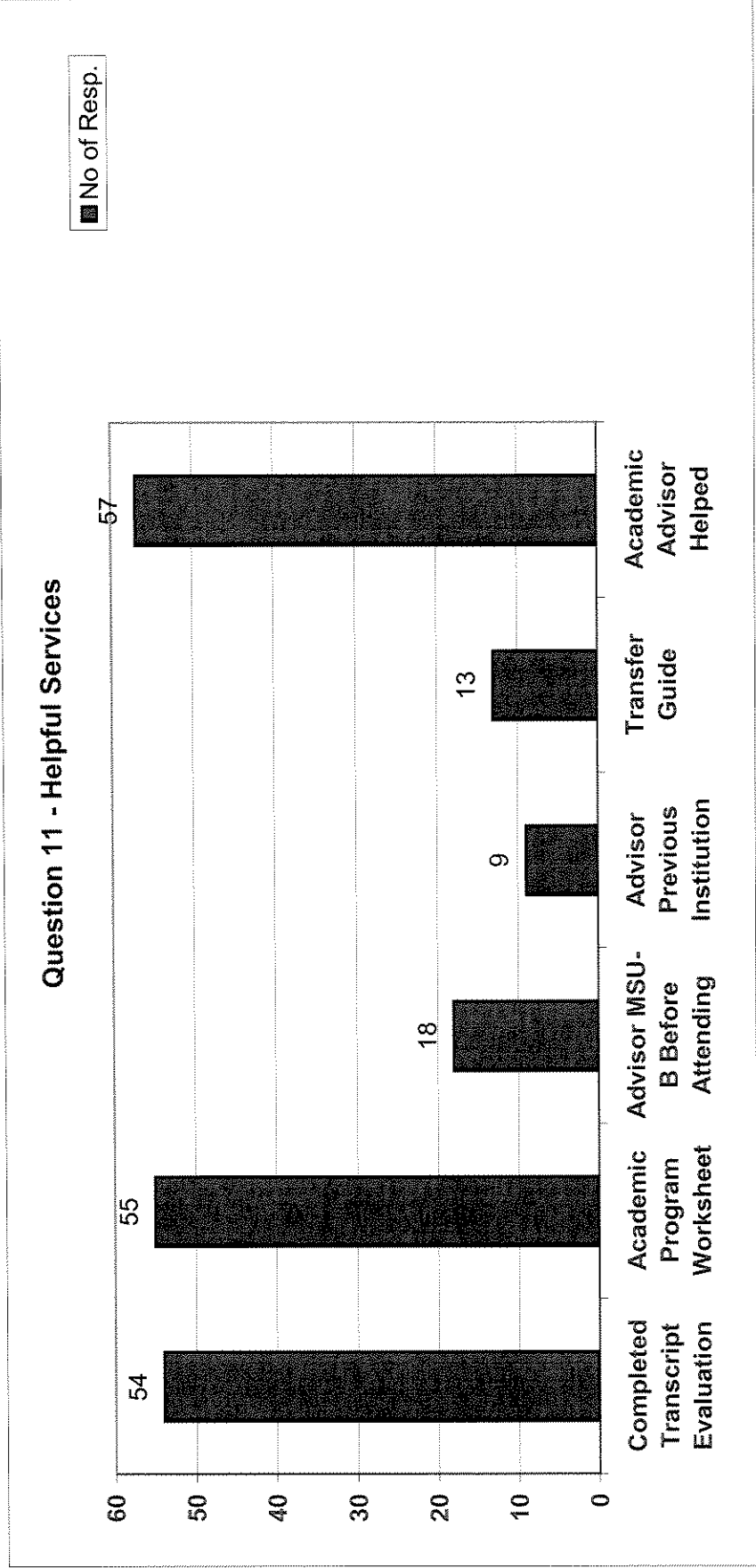


**Montana State University-Billings
Data for Respondent Group - Transfer Student Survey**

11. What services did MSU-Billings provide that helped make your transfer go smoothly? (Indicate all that apply.)

Service	No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
My transcript evaluation was completed before I selected my fall semester courses.	54	58.1%	(+/-) 10.0%
I received an Academic Program worksheet that explains degree requirements.	55	59.1%	(+/-) 10.0%
I met with an academic advisor from MSU-Billings while still enrolled at my previous college.	18	19.4%	(+/-) 8.0%
My advisor at my previous institution was aware of and advised me on transfer equivalency.	9	9.7%	(+/-) 6.0%
I used a Transfer Guide to plan my academic program.	13	14.0%	(+/-) 7.1%
I met with an academic advisor to develop a plan of study.	57	61.3%	(+/-) 9.9%

No of Resp. 93
Mean 34.3



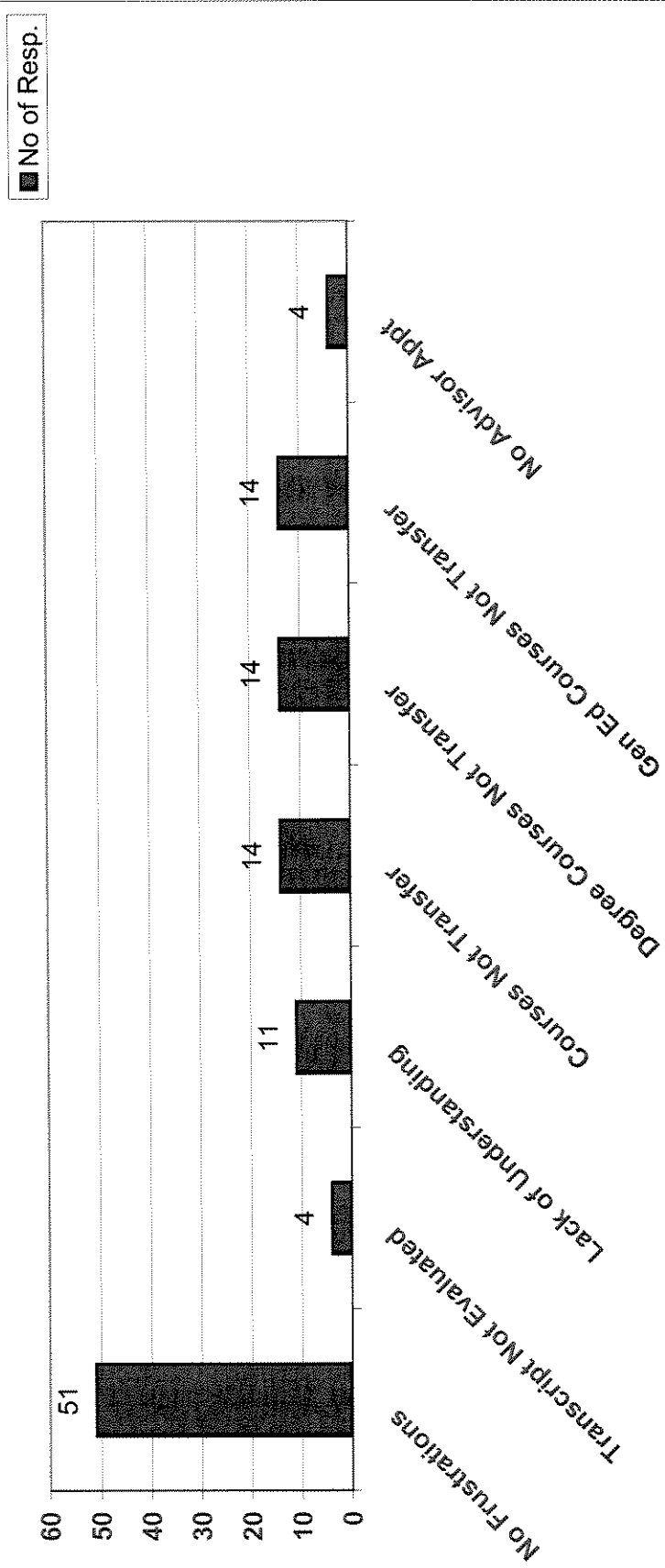
**Montana State University-Billings
Data for Respondent Group - Transfer Student Survey**

12. What frustrations did you encounter in transferring to MSU-Billings? (Indicate all that apply.)

Frustration	No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
I have no frustrations.	51	56.7%	(+/-) 10.2%
I was not able to have my transcript evaluated prior to selecting fall semester courses.	4	4.4%	(+/-) 4.3%
I was not able to understand what courses are required for my major.	11	12.2%	(+/-) 6.8%
Courses from my previous school did not transfer to MSU-Billings.	14	15.6%	(+/-) 7.5%
Courses from my previous school did not fulfill degree requirements at MSU-Billings.	14	15.6%	(+/-) 7.5%
Courses from my previous school did not fulfill General Education requirements at MSU-Billings.	14	15.6%	(+/-) 7.5%
I was not able to meet with an academic advisor prior to selecting fall semester classes.	4	4.4%	(+/-) 4.3%

No of Resp. 90
Mean 16

Question 12 - Frustrations

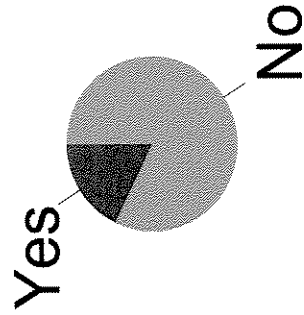


**Montana State University-Billings
Data for Respondent Group - Transfer Student Survey**

13. Are there any problems that have not been resolved related to your transferring to MSU-Billings?

	No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
Yes	18	17.8%	(+/-) 7.5%
No	83	82.2%	(+/-) 7.5%

No of Resp. 101



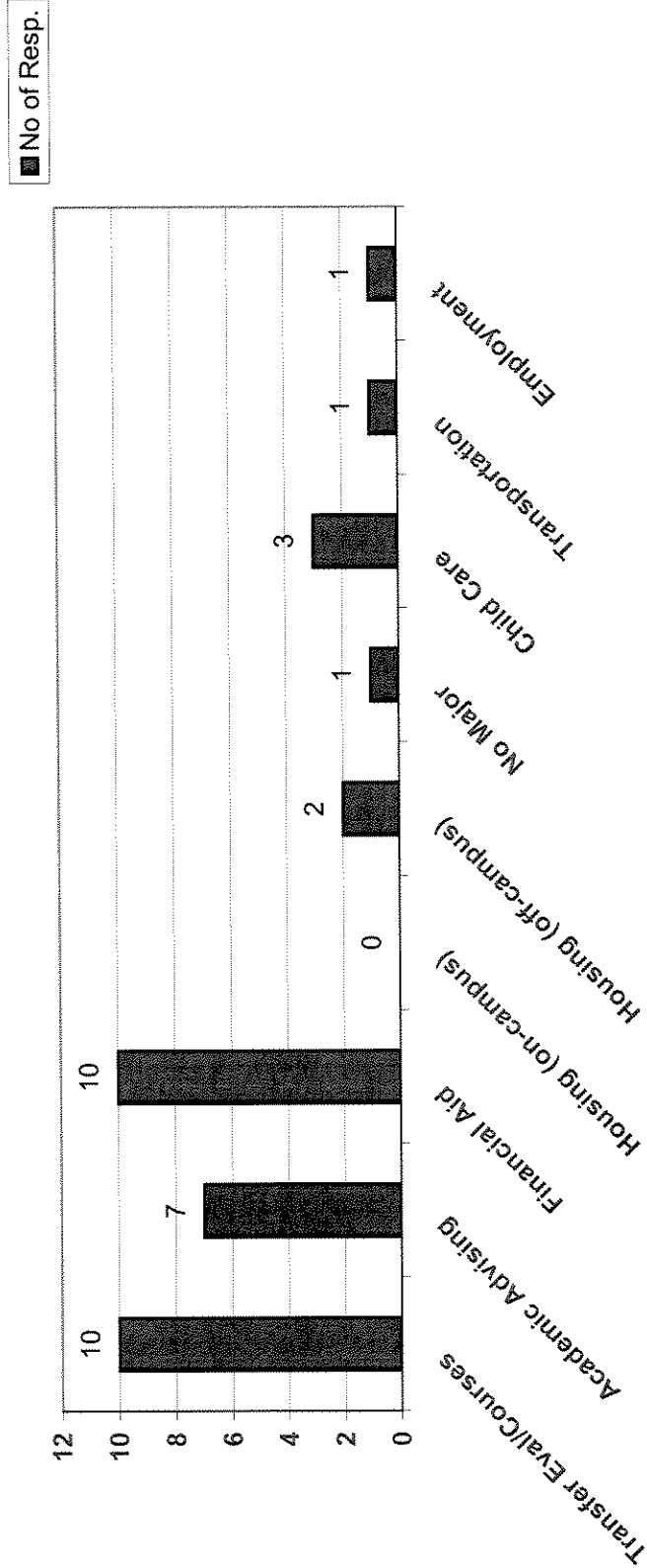
**Montana State University-Billings
Data for Respondent Group - Transfer Student Survey**

14. If yes, what is the nature of the problem? (Indicate all that apply.)

	No of Resp.	Percent	Margin of Error
Transcript evaluation or course transfer	10	47.6%	(+/-) 21.4%
Academic advising issues	7	33.3%	(+/-) 20.2%
Financial aid issues	10	47.6%	(+/-) 21.4%
Housing (on-campus)	0	0.0%	(+/-) 0.0%
Housing (off campus)	2	9.5%	(+/-) 12.6%
Career planning (I have not selected a major.)	1	4.8%	(+/-) 9.1%
Child Care	3	14.3%	(+/-) 15.0%
Transportation	1	4.8%	(+/-) 9.1%
Employment (I can't find a job.)	1	4.8%	(+/-) 9.1%

**No of Resp. 21
Mean 3.9**

Question 14 - Problems



Questions 15-Do you have any additional comments regarding the services that are available for students transferring to Montana State University-Billings? (Responses are unedited, however, referenced names are deleted and replaced with [Student], [Faculty], or [Staff].

- My original transcripts from Montana Tech were sent, but I still am getting notices from MSU-Billings that they still need the originals. Do I need to send this original by registered mail?
- The Transfer Process was quick and easy at MSU-B. I have had a great time while enrolled here. Thanks for all of your help.
- good job
- I have found the staff at MSU-B to be very helpful. It has made being a distance learning student much easier.
- Everything seems to be going well, except I still have some questions about selecting the appropriate classes for my thematic concentration and how to develop it.
- I did run into a minor problem when I met with my faculty advisor to sign up for Spring courses. Some of the classes weren't shown as transferred, but my advisor gave me credit for them, so all is well.
- I was very impressed with the transitional process. I went on campus once for advising before school started. I didn't need to do anything else to transfer and that was really relieving to me.
- I was given a lower level advisor, instead of upper level. This was confusing. Also, to my knowledge, my credits have not been transferred yet.
- It has been very frustrating having to deal with deferment of my financial aid when I went from MSU-Boz to here. I thought that was really unnecessary!
- I am an online student so I spoke with my advisor via the telephone and the whole process went very smoothly. The online program and flow of communication is great and I feel surprisingly connected to MSUB though I am many miles away.
- The only thing that I have to say is I had to go through four different people to get the right advisor. The students then feel frustrated and there's no need at all for that!
- So far everything has been great except my advisor in the advising center has a lot of misinformation which I find frustrating. With the help of a professor I think that some of the misinformation has been corrected and cleared - up.
- I got fantastic service from the book store. I love my classes. [Staff] is super to work with. The people in the financial aid office are either too busy to get their work done or simply ignoring my calls and e-mails.
- None
- It was hard to transfer from a private college to MSU. I took many courses in my major, but must retake courses due to 'they don't quite have the same content' Students like me should be able to take a placement test to aid placement in their degree.
- My 'transfer' advisor mis-advised me on 3 classes. I enrolled for the online classes as she suggested, only to find out from my current advisor that they were not needed. Now I can not be refunded for her mistake!!!
- I transferred from MSU-Bozeman. I was very upset to find out that my financial aid would not just carry over to Billings. The financial aid office lost some of my paperwork and was not very helpful.
- I was frustrated because I couldn't apply for the child care scholarships. However, other than the frustration of trying to find my classes (buildings) the first day my experience has been fairly good.
- I think the services are helpful, but I still am not sure that I should be meeting with an advisor that is not in my major. I hope that by keeping this advisor I don't get led in the wrong direction.
- none
- The academic advisor I saw had no idea what she was doing. She didn't help me at all. She told me I had to take certain gen ed classes because they didn't transfer well I talked to someone in my department and they told me otherwise.
- I am very pleased with my whole experience at Montana State. I really do like this much better than the University of Phoenix which I was previously attending. Thank you for providing the online opportunity to us.
- I had no help for you when I transferred. I had to arrange for everything, do most of it myself because my 1st advisor missed things, when it was time to register for spring no one had notified me of who my advisor was so I had to figure it out myself.
- I have a double major-Span Ed and Psyc-with an advisor in each area. Along with an advisor in the advisement center, that's four. I'm not sure who will help for everything or how to bring it all together. Some record keeping is not set up well for this
- Yes, I would like some one to contact me to discuss my sophomore status.
- Regarding, [Staff] in the education department (field experiences). Myself and many included that I have spoken with have the same problem and that is [Staff] is extremely rude and does not communicate with students about field experiences.
- I like going to school at MSU-Billings, but I'm not very happy with the long process that it take to register for next semester. I had to make an appointment for a day in December and hopefully by then some of the classes will still be open.

- I do not like to pay at least \$700 for a meal plan, since I am a transfer student and live in the dorms, it is ridiculous.
- I had a blue paper filled out for me - if that's what a plan of study is.
- My fault for not getting my transcripts in a timely manner.
- I have found the people in the advising office to be extremely rude and unhelpful at times when I needed help badly and felt very frustrated and confused.
- I am dissatisfied with the increase of tuition that seems to be the trend for all public institutions. I chose MSU Billings over Rocky because of the 'best education for my money' however, this seems to be changing.
- I am extremely interested in getting teaching experience while pursuing my major. I am extremely interested in volunteer opportunities in teaching elementary education while pursuing my major.
- no
- The Secretary in the Advising Center was more help to me than the advisor you assigned me to. Prof. [Faculty] has agreed to be my advisor since that first encounter but I still have no idea what you will accept and what you won't.
- Our advisor isn't meeting with us until three weeks after registration day. Classes I might want are filled. Transcripts from previous universities are lost. I am not able to get the financial aid I need because I was working full time last year.
- Was advised to take RN requirements for Miles City RN Program but [Staff] thinks grant money for program will run out before I get my LPN at the COT. Have switched to program thru MSU-B and classes took this semester will not count (Nutrition, Ethics)
- I have a family of 3 children and this program caused me a hardship. The business office credited \$2090.10 to my account by error and mailed me a refund. Being a 1st time student at MSU-B I thought the refund was my Pell grant. Now I am in debt \$2090.10.
- I really enjoy school here. I have been to 4 other schools and this one is by far my favorite! Thank you for all the great help. I am also very impressed with the professors in the history department and the dean. Everyone has been helpful.
- Because of certain classes only being offered in the fall, I have had to extend my graduation by a semester, which is unsettling. All courses should be offered both in the Spring and Fall and also during the summer semesters.
- I am very satisfied with the service and the classes.
- no
- I am trying to have my faculty advisor help me get information on how I can attain a library science certification. I have not received any information back as of yet and feel that I may have to contact another school to see if they can help me.
- there needs to be more online classes available in the English education department
- [Staff] was very helpful in both evaluating my grades and fall/spring class enrollment. My transition went smoothly.
- None
- I was very happy. I much prefer MSU-B over Rocky!
- No
- As a student, the process was vague and stressful. I was told everything was fine, but than I received a letter saying that they didn't have my transcript from my old school. The process was frustrating and I'm displeased with the way things were handled
- Dissatisfaction!!!!
- None

Summary of Fall 2003 and Fall 2002 Survey Results:

	2003	2002
Met with an advisor	92%	84%
Satisfied or very satisfied with advisor assistance	85%	91%
Completed a transcript evaluation with advisor	87%	82%
Satisfied with credit transfer to institution	85%	85%
Understood the credit process and were satisfied	67%	66%
Unresolved problems relating to transferring	18%	18%
College of Technology	8%	10%
College of Education and Human Services	18%	28%
College of Arts and Sciences	48%	32%
College of Business	21%	20%
General Studies/Undeclared Majors	5%	10%
Traditional Age	40%	50%
Non Traditional Age	60%	50%
Full Time Students	83%	83%
Female Students	74%	75%
Male Students	26%	25%

Number of Unresolved Issues	2003	2002
Financial Aid	10	8
Course Transfer	10	7
Academic Advising	7	3

	2003	2002
Transferred from Montana Schools	47%	48%
Carroll College	2	0
Chief Dull Knife College	3	2
Dawson Community College	2	8
Flathead Valley Community College	2	2
Helena College of Technology	2	1
Little Big Horn College	0	1
Miles Community College	4	5
Montana State University-Bozeman	15	11
Montana State University-Northern	1	3
Montana Tech of Univ. of Montana	2	1
MSU College of Tech-Great Falls	2	2
Rocky Mountain College	3	1
Salish Kootenai College	1	0
University of Great Falls	2	3
University of Montana	4	6
University of Montana-Western	2	1

	2003	2002
Transferred from Out of State Institutions	53%	52%
AK	0	1
AZ	4	1
CA	5	6
CO	0	2
FL	0	1
GA	1	0
IA	3	0
ID	5	0
IL	1	0
IN	1	0
KS	0	1
MD	0	1
MN	1	1
MO	0	2
NC	0	1
ND	8	6
NE	2	2
NM	0	1
NY	1	1
OR	2	2
OH	0	1
PA	1	0
RI	1	0
SD	3	1
TX	0	2
UT	1	1
VA	2	0
WA	2	2
WI	0	1
WY	10	15
Unknown	1	0

There was a 9% increase in transfer students meeting with an advisor and a 5% increase in transcript evaluation from Fall 2002 to Fall 2003. 85% of the students this year and last year were satisfied with the transfer process. There was a decrease of 5% in advisor assistance satisfaction from 91% last year to 86% this year. Unresolved problems both years were focused on financial aid, course transfer, and academic advising issues. Resolution of unsolved problems from the comment section and increasing customer satisfaction will be the focus of the Student Affairs staff. The survey has revealed a high success rate when students transfer to Montana State University-Billings and is a valuable tool to assess our services and staff.

Respectfully submitted:
Linda J. Wham
Institutional Research Analyst



Montana State University-Billings

Transfer Student Survey

Appendix A

*Access & Excellence***1. Last Name****2. First Name****3. What major were you pursuing at your previous school?****4. I visited with an academic advisor to develop a plan of study?** Yes No**5. If yes, how satisfied were you with the help that you received from your academic advisor?** Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied**6. If no, how did you develop your plan of study at MSU-Billings?** I did not develop a plan of study. I had a friend help me. I talked with a faculty advisor in the Department to which I transferred. What is a plan of study?**7. Did your academic advisor complete a transcript evaluation to show how your transfer credits would apply to your major at MSU-Billings?** Yes No**8. If yes, how satisfied were you with the way your credits transferred to MSU-Billings?** Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied**9. If no, why was a transcript evaluation not completed?** I did not have transcripts available to evaluate. I met with an advisor but a transcript evaluation was not completed.

10. What part of the credit transfer process do you/do you not understand? (Check all that apply.)

- I understand all parts of the process, and I am very satisfied.
- I don't understand why some of my credit can't be used to fulfill degree requirements.
- I don't understand the part about General Education.
- I don't understand the part about requirements for my major.
- I don't understand any part and I need help.

11. What services did MSU-Billings provide that helped make your transfer go smoothly? (Indicate all that apply.)

- My transcript evaluation was completed before I selected my fall semester courses.
- I received an Academic Program worksheet that explains degree requirements.
- I met with an academic advisor from MSU-Billings while still enrolled at my previous college.
- My advisor at my previous institution was aware of and advised me on transfer equivalency.
- I used a Transfer Guide to plan my academic program.
- I met with an academic advisor to develop a plan of study.

12. What frustrations did you encounter in transferring to MSU-Billings? (Indicate all that apply.)

- I have no frustrations.
- I was not able to have my transcript evaluated prior to selecting fall semester courses.
- I was not able to understand what courses are required for my major.
- Courses from my previous school did not transfer to MSU-Billings.
- Courses from my previous school did not fulfill degree requirements at MSU-Billings.
- Courses from my previous school did not fulfill General Education requirements at MSU-Billings.
- I was not able to meet with an academic advisor prior to selecting fall semester classes.

13. Are there any problems that have not been resolved related to your transferring to MSU-Billings?

- Yes
- No

14. If yes, what is the nature of the problem? (Indicate all that apply.)

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transcript evaluation or course transfer | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic advising issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial aid issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing (on-campus) | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing (off campus) | <input type="checkbox"/> Career planning (I have not selected a major.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Employment (I can't find a job.) |

15. Do you have any additional comments regarding the services that are available for students transferring to Montana State University-Billings?

Clear

Submit

*made with software from www.surveymview.com
License Registered for: Montana State University - Billings*

November 14, 2003

TO: Fall Semester 2003 Incoming Transfer Students

FROM: Curt Kochner
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

RE: Transfer Student Survey

We are asking all new transfer students to complete a short survey about the transfer process. Your comments will help us revise and improve our services.

The survey has been designed to be administered on the web, and it should take less than five minutes to complete.

If you receive this by email, please click on the web link, fill in your responses and submit.

<http://www.msubillings.edu/Surveyadmin5/TransferStudentSurvey.asp>

If you receive this by mail, please complete the survey and return it in the enclosed envelope.

I thank you in advance for taking a few moments to complete this survey. It will be very helpful as we strive to serve our transfer students in the best possible manner.