

## Montana State University-Bozeman Transfer Survey, Fall 2003

In early September, Admissions and New Student Services (ANSS) sent out emails to 725 transfer students who enrolled at MSU-Bozeman for the Fall 2003 semester, asking them to complete a web-based survey about their application experiences. By mid-September, 112 transfer students completed the survey, for response rate of 15%. The sample comes from all over the US and Canada, with 66 from Montana. Almost 50 students transferred here from another college in Montana, including other MSU and UM campuses, community colleges, and private MT campuses.

### Major Findings – Enrolled Transfer Students

Figure 1 shows the most popular factors that influenced the decisions of enrolling transfer students (they could mention three factors). Location was the most popular factor, mentioned by more than half of students who enrolled at MSU-Bozeman, including those who liked the distance from home as well as those who liked the proximity to home. Specific programs were also a major contributor to transfer students attending MSU-Bozeman, with Nursing, Architecture, Math, the Engineering departments, Art, and other programs all receiving specific attention. About one-third mentioned the atmosphere of Bozeman and the surrounding environment, including winter sports, mountains, and other opportunities to play off campus. Finally, cost, including in-state tuition and financial aid awards, was mentioned by almost one-third of the attendees.

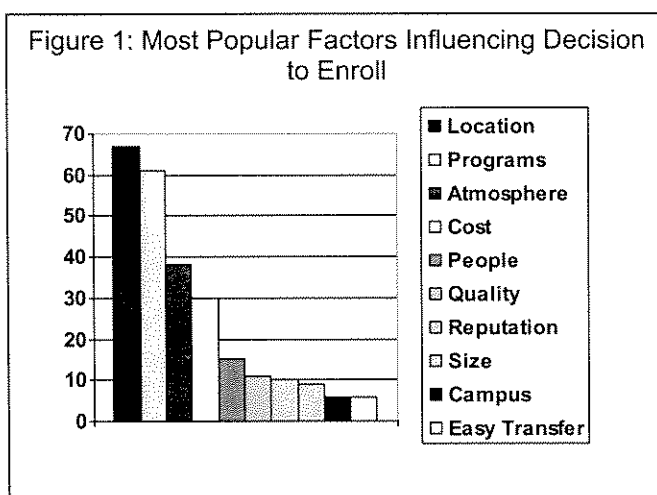
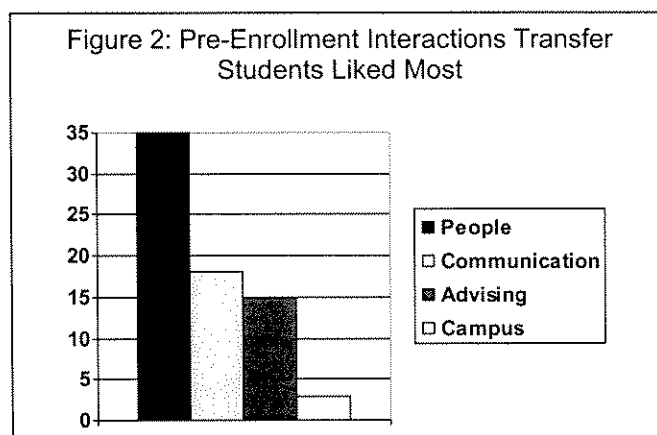
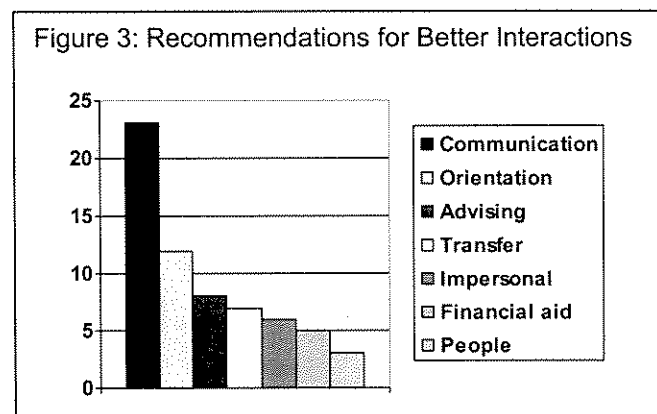
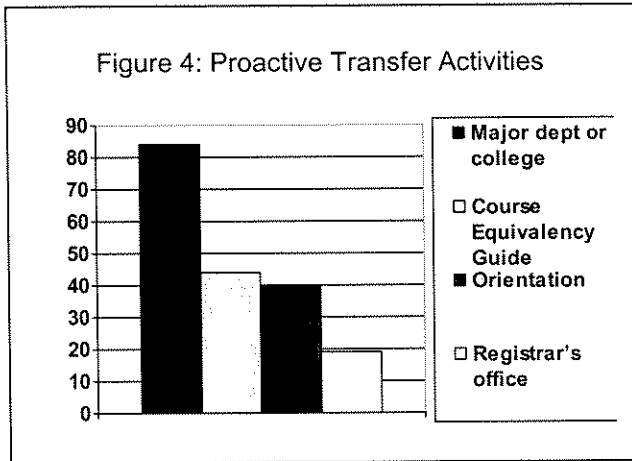


Figure 2 shows what transfer students liked most about their interactions with MSU-Bozeman before enrolling. Friendly and helpful people were the most popular response, followed by the communications that flowed from MSU. Students liked the frequency, timeliness, and content of emails, phone calls, and visits. Advising and the campus itself also received substantial attention.

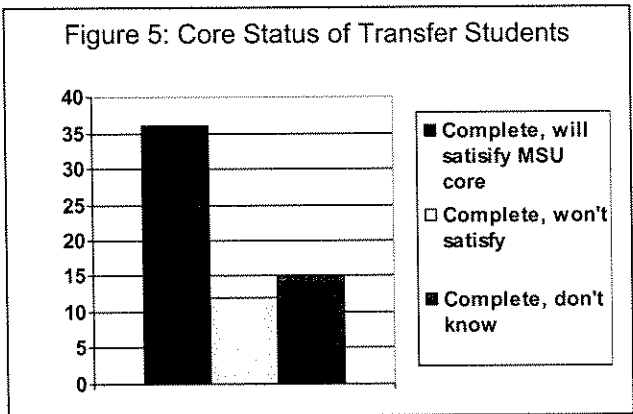


Students were asked what MSU-Bozeman could have done better in their interactions with prospective students, shown in Figure 3. Many explicitly mentioned that they had no recommendations for ANSS or other staff, liking the interactions they had (not shown on figure). Among improvements mentioned were the frequency, content, or coordination of communications; Orientation; advising; transfer issues; financial aid processes and staff; and a general sense of being treated impersonally.





Transfer students reported what they did to ease their transfer process prior to enrolling, shown in Figure 4. Most spoke with someone in their major department or college, but less than half took advantage of the online Course Evaluation Guide, informal consultation with the Registrar's Office, or Orientation. These resources might be underused by students before they arrive for the first term.



If a student has completed the general education or core requirements at another institution, MSU-Bozeman should count its core as completed. Enrolled students were asked about what they had been told about the status of their own core requirements if they had completed them elsewhere. A plurality of transfers have not finished the requirements. Among those who had, all but twelve believe they have satisfied the MSU-Bozeman core or don't yet know. Advising of those remaining twelve may need to be examined for consistency.

Conclusions

Over three-fourths of the transfer students who enrolled at MSU-Bozeman expressed satisfaction with the help they received in the transfer process. Few students reported problems with transferring credits, advising, or lacking information. Over half of those who enrolled reported that most or all of their credits would transfer and that people on campus were helpful in the transfer process.

Students were not as likely to use the Course Equivalency Guide, a web-based self-inventory transfer tool, as advisors might hope. Better use of this tool would ease a student's articulation process and likely increase their satisfaction with the process. Better advertising of its availability would probably increase use.