



The First-Year Student Survey report was developed to share information with the university community about the incoming James Madison University (JMU) freshmen students' attitudes, values, perceptions and experiences. It is hoped that through the sharing of this information a better understanding will develop about the JMU student.

JMU requested incoming students to complete the First-Year Student Survey online. The survey collects responses to questions about respondents' decision to attend college and, more specifically, James Madison University; their experiences in high school; and their attitudes, values and beliefs. Demographic data were also requested.

This report displays data obtained via the 4,104 usable surveys from the incoming freshmen during March, April, May, June, and July.

DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF INCOMING FRESHMAN CLASS

Incoming freshmen identify as the following genders: 55% female, 43% male, and 1% non-binary/gender non-conforming (Table 1). Ninety four percent of incoming students indicated that their age was 18 years old or younger and 6 % indicated that they were 19 years or older (Table 3). Caucasian was the most reported race at 78%, this was followed by Asian/Pacific Islander at 6%, Hispanic at 5%, Multiracial at 5%, and then African-American/Black at 4% (Table 2). Additionally, 10% of incoming students reported to be first generation (Table 16). First-year students were also asked to indicate their political preferences (Table 5). Forty percent of the respondents indicated a liberal political preference and thirty-five percent reported a middle of the road preference, while twenty-five percent indicated a conservative preference (Table 5). Ten percent of respondents reported that they were first-generation students (Table 4).

ACTIVITIES AND EDUCATION IN HIGH SCHOOL

Forty-four percent of incoming students reported being in the top twenty-five percent of their high school class and obtaining average grades of A- and higher (67%) (Tables 5 & 6). Like in previous years, more than one-half of this year's respondents report that they feel very well prepared from high school in the areas of reading and social studies (Table 7). Female students said more often than male students that they were very well prepared in reading, composition, foreign languages, artistic skills, study skills, musical skills, and time management. Males more often said they were very well prepared in computer skills, mathematical skills, science, and social studies.

First-year students were also asked to indicate the areas in which they felt they would need special tutoring or remedial work while in college (Table 9). Fifty-three percent indicated a need for special tutoring or remedial work in mathematics, twenty-nine percent in foreign languages, and twenty-six percent in science.

Similar to results in previous years, more than one-half of this year's students said they were very active in organized athletics, and part-time work (Table 10). Female students stated more often than male students that they were very active in extra-curricular activities including academic clubs, foreign language/international clubs, fine arts groups, part-time work, school spirit clubs, religious groups, publications, and school and community service, while male students were more active in the areas of recreational sports and organized athletics.

ATTENDING COLLEGE AND JMU

The majority of first-year students applied to two or more colleges (Table 12). Forty percent applied to six or more schools and twenty-eight percent of respondents were accepted to six or more other colleges (Table 13). Similar to prior years, the majority of students reported that campus visits were the most important means for learning about JMU (Table 18). Seventy-six percent of students reported that JMU was their first choice of colleges (Table 14). Ninety percent or more of the respondents view JMU as friendly, good, supportive and open and accessible (Table 22). Relatedly, over ninety percent of students were enthusiastic about and happy to be at JMU (Table 20). Racial minorities were more likely to view JMU as not diverse.

ACADEMIC GOALS/EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES

Fifty-nine percent of this year's respondents plan to pursue a degree beyond the baccalaureate (Table 15). Incoming freshmen were asked to indicate their own philosophies concerning the emphasis of higher education. Forty-four percent of this year's respondents said they hold a vocational philosophy of education, which is viewed as preparation for an occupation. Thirty-four percent of respondents hold a social philosophy of higher education, where social life and loyalty to college is emphasized. Following at thirteen percent was intellectual philosophy, where emphasis is placed on scholarly pursuit of knowledge. Nine percent of the respondents have an artistic philosophy viewed as having an emphasis on ideas, art forms, and individuality (Table 17). Female students more often reported a vocational philosophy and artistic philosophy while male students more often reported a social philosophy.

Listed in the following tables are summaries of data collected in 2022 (2021, 2020 and 2019 figures, when available, are in parentheses).

For more information about this survey, please contact the Office of Institutional Research via phone: 540.568.7208, or email: ask-oir@jmu.edu.

Table 1	Gender of the Respondents
	2022(2020/ 2019)
Females	55%(58%/ 59%)
Males	43%(41%/ 40%)
Transgender	0%(0%/ 0%)
Non-binary/Non-conforming	1%(0%/ 0%)
Other	0%(0%/ 0%)

Table 2	Race of the Respondents
	2022(2020/ 2019)
Caucasian-American/White	78%(77%/ 80%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	6%(4%/ 6%)
African-American/Black	4%(5%/ 5%)
Hispanic	5%(8%/ 5%)
Multiracial	5%(5%/ 4%)
Unreported	0%(0%/ 0%)
Native American	0%(0%/ 0%)
Non-Resident Alien	2%(1%/ 1%)

Table 3	Age of the Respondents
	2022(2020/ 2019)
18 years or younger	94%(94%/ 93%)
19 years or older	6%(6%/ 7%)

Table 4	First Generation Status
	2022(2020/ 2019)
No	90%(87%/ 0%)
Yes	10%(12%/ 0%)
Unknown/Unreported	1%(1%/ 0%)

Table 5	Political Preference
	2022(2020/ 2019)
Liberal	40%(36%/ 35%)
Middle-of-the-Road	35%(34%/ 38%)
Conservative	25%(30%/ 28%)

Table 6	Average Grade in High School
	2022(2020/ 2019)
A or A+	28%(22%/ 22%)
A-	39%(39%/ 37%)
B+	25%(29%/ 29%)
B	8%(9%/ 11%)
B-	1%(1%/ 1%)
C+	0%(0%/ 0%)
C	0%(0%/ 0%)

Table 7	Approximate High School Rank in Graduating Class
	2022(2020/ 2019)
Top ten percent	17%(19%/ 18%)
Top twenty-five percent	44%(43%/ 44%)
Top fifty percent	36%(36%/ 35%)
Bottom fifty percent	3%(3%/ 3%)

Table 8	Areas Very Well Prepared from High School
	2022(2020/ 2019)
Reading	53%(56%/ 54%)
Social Studies	52%(56%/ 51%)
Composition	47%(50%/ 47%)
Science	42%(45%/ 39%)
Time management	33%(35%/ 34%)
Vocational skills	31%(29%/ 27%)
Mathematical skills	30%(31%/ 32%)
Computer skills	28%(27%/ 27%)
Study habits	28%(31%/ 30%)
Artistic skills	23%(23%/ 18%)
Musical skills	22%(23%/ 19%)
Foreign languages	19%(23%/ 21%)

Table 9	Need for Special Tutoring or Remedial Work
	2022(2020/ 2019)
Mathematics	53%(53%/ 54%)
Foreign language	29%(30%/ 25%)
Science	26%(29%/ 31%)
Writing	19%(22%/ 19%)
English	12%(13%/ 12%)
Social studies	8%(8%/ 8%)
Reading	7%(7%/ 7%)

Table 10	Areas Very Active During High School
	2022(2020/ 2019)
Organized athletics	60%(61%/ 60%)
Part-time work	54%(49%/ 50%)
Recreational sports	45%(42%/ 39%)
School and community service	44%(53%/ 49%)
School spirit clubs cheer- leaders, pep, drill, etc.	29%(32%/ 31%)
Academic clubs	24%(28%/ 28%)
Fine arts groups	21%(22%/ 20%)
Religious clubs	14%(17%/ 16%)
Foreign Language/International Clubs	10%(12%/ 11%)
Publications	6%(6%/ 6%)

Table 11 **Reasons Considered Very Important in Deciding to Attend College**

	2022(2020/2019)
Learn more about the things that interest me	87%(90%/ 90%)
Be able to get a better job	84%(87%/ 87%)
Meet new and interesting people	84%(86%/ 84%)
Gain a general education and appreciation of ideas	81%(82%/ 84%)
Be on my own and make my own decisions	81%(82%/ 84%)
Be able to make more money	81%(82%/ 84%)
Make me a more cultured person	57%(62%/ 60%)
Prepare myself for graduate or professional school	57%(59%/ 62%)
Improve reading and study skills	57%(59%/ 62%)
Developing a global awareness	51%(55%/ 54%)
Enhance my social life	47%(42%/ 40%)
Please my parents	20%(22%/ 23%)
Meet my future spouse	8%(8%/ 9%)
Do what my friends are doing	5%(4%/ 4%)

Table 12 **Number of Other Colleges – Applied**

	2022(2020/ 2019)
None	4%(6%/ 4%)
One	5%(8%/ 7%)
Two	9%(11%/ 12%)
Three	13%(13%/ 15%)
Four	14%(15%/ 16%)
Five	15%(14%/ 15%)
Six or more	40%(34%/ 32%)

Table 13 **Number of Other Colleges – Accepted**

	2022(2020/ 2019)
None	0%(0%/ 0%)
One	12%(20%/ 20%)
Two	16%(16%/ 18%)
Three	17%(16%/ 18%)
Four	16%(15%/ 15%)
Five	11%(11%/ 12%)
Six or more	28%(22%/ 18%)

Table 14 **JMU as Choice Among Other Colleges**

	2022(2020/2019)
First Choice	76%(80%/ 80%)
Second Choice	20%(17%/ 16%)
Third Choice	4%(3%/ 4%)

Table 15 **Highest Academic Degree Respondents Intend to Obtain**

	2022(2020/ 2019)
Baccalaureate degree	40%(35%/ 31%)
Master’s degree	41%(44%/ 46%)
Specialist degree e.g., Ed.S.	1%(1%/ 1%)
Doctoral degree e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., D.B.A.	9%(10%/ 12%)
Professional degree e.g., medicine, law, theology	8%(10%/ 11%)
Not a degree seeking student	0%(0%/ 0%)

Table 16 **Philosophy of Education**

	2022(2020/ 2019)
Vocational philosophy education viewed as preparation for an occupation	44%(49%/ 49%)
Social philosophy social life and loyalty to college emphasized	34%(29%/ 28%)
Intellectual philosophy emphasis on scholarly pursuit of knowledge	13%(14%/ 17%)
Artistic philosophy emphasis on ideas, art forms, individuality	9%(8%/ 7%)

Table 17 **Means of Learning About JMU**

	2022(2020/2019)
Campus visits	66%(58%/ 66%)
Relatives	27%(11%/ 28%)
Alumni	21%(9%/ 21%)
Friends	20%(11%/ 19%)
JMU web-site	13%(5%/ 13%)
People at my high school	11%(5%/ 14%)
JMU representative	10%(3%/ 11%)
Material I received in the mail	7%(2%/ 9%)

Table 18 **Reasons Considered Very Important in Deciding to Attend JMU**

	2022(2020/ 2019)
JMU has good extracurricular opportunities and social life	88%(89%/ 87%)
Supportive atmosphere of JMU	86%(89%/ 89%)
JMU has a good academic reputation	85%(88%/ 88%)
JMU offers a major of interest to me	84%(86%/ 90%)
Appearance and setting of JMU	83%(86%/ 87%)
Reputation of JMU’s graduates obtaining desirable jobs	82%(86%/ 84%)
Range and availability of student services	67%(68%/ 61%)
Reputation of JMU’s graduates attending top graduate schools	66%(68%/ 67%)

Size of JMU	64%(65%/ 65%)
Live on the campus	62%(68%/ 67%)
Identify with fellow students	60%(65%/ 61%)
Change in scenery or location	57%(57%/ 51%)
Someone who had been here before advised me to attend	40%(42%/ 44%)
JMU has low tuition	32%(36%/ 36%)
Friend suggested attending	27%(28%/ 29%)
Offered financial aid	20%(20%/ 20%)
Employers' suggestion	14%(15%/ 8%)
Relatives wanted me to come here	13%(15%/ 15%)
Guidance counselor advised me	10%(12%/ 13%)
My teacher advised me	7%(9%/ 9%)
To help retain my current employment	7%(7%/ 5%)
JMU representative recruited me	4%(4%/ 5%)
Not accepted anywhere else	4%(3%/ 4%)
I wanted to live at home	4%(3%/ 3%)

Table 19 Sense of Belonging to JMU (Percentage of Respondents Who Agree to Some Extent on the Following)

	2022(2020/2019)
Enthusiastic about JMU	94%(95%/ 95%)
Happy to be at JMU	92%(94%/ 93%)
See myself as a member of the JMU community	83%(86%/ 89%)
Sense of belonging	80%(83%/ 85%)
Feel a part of the JMU community	76%(80%/ 85%)
Believe JMU is one of the best schools in the nation	74%(80%/ 82%)

Table 20 Emphases of JMU (Percentage of Respondents Who Believe that JMU Places a Significant Emphasis on the Following)

	2022(2020/2019)
Relationships with other students, student groups and activities	58%(62%/ 57%)
Personal growth self-awareness	55%(60%/ 58%)
Development of academic scholarly/intellectual qualities	52%(60%/ 59%)
Personal development as citizen	49%(55%/ 53%)
Personal relevance and practical value of your courses	49%(52%/ 49%)
Development of vocational and occupational competencies	46%(50%/ 45%)
Development of aesthetic, expressive, and creative qualities	43%(47%/ 43%)
Being critical, evaluative and analytical	43%(46%/ 48%)

Table 21

	Student Perceptions of JMU 2022(2020)		
Good	Neutral	Bad	
96%(96%/97%)	3%(3%/ 3%)	0% (0%)	
Friendly	Neutral	Cold	
95%(96%/96%)	4%(4%/ 4%)	0% (0%)	
Supportive	Neutral	Non-Supportive	
93%(93%/95%)	6%(7%/ 5%)	0% (0%)	
Open and Accessible	Neutral	Closed and Inaccessible	
90%(90%/91%)	9%(9%/ 8%)	1% (1%)	
Progressive	Neutral	Regressive	
85%(86%/89%)	15%(13%/11%)	1% (0%)	
Intellectual	Neutral	Nonintellectual	
85%(85%/88%)	14%(14%/11%)	2% (1%)	
Flexible	Neutral	Rigid	
85%(84%/86%)	14%(15%/13%)	1% (1%)	
Emotionally Healthy	Neutral	Causing Anxiety & Frustration	
75%(80%/83%)	22%(18%/16%)	3% (2%)	
Right Size	Neutral	Too Large	
81%(85%/83%)	15%(12%/13%)	4% (4%)	
Integrated	Neutral	Fragmented	
74%(77%/79%)	25%(21%/20%)	2% (2%)	
Challenging	Neutral	Not Challenging	
59%(65%/68%)	36%(31%/29%)	5% (3%)	
Sensitive	Neutral	Indifferent	
60%(61%/62%)	36%(35%/35%)	4% (3%)	
Diverse	Neutral	Not Diverse	
61%(63%/62%)	25%(24%/25%)	14% (13%)	
Traditional	Neutral	Experimental	
38%(49%/43%)	46%(39%/44%)	16% (12%)	

Table 22

	Studies Abroad Intentions 2022(2020/2019)
I do not plan to study abroad	56%(47%/ 42%)
I plan to attend a JMU Studies Abroad Program	41%(49%/ 54%)
I plan to pursue an international internship	2%(3%/ 3%)
I plan to attend a foreign university with an international exchange program	1%(1%/ 1%)

Table 23 Costs of Attending JMU Paid Directly by the Student and His/Her Family

	2022(2020/ 2019)
80-100% of the total costs	57%(57%/ 56%)
60-79% of the total costs	15%(12%/ 15%)
40-59% of the total costs	12%(12%/ 11%)
20-39% of the total costs	7%(7%/ 8%)
0-19% of the total costs	10%(11%/ 10%)

Table 24	Type of Internet Access Utilized from Parents' Home
	2022(2020/2019)
Cable Modem	73%(75%/ 72%)
Satellite	15%(11%/ 13%)
DSL-ADSL	7%(8%/ 9%)
ISDN	3%(3%/ 4%)
Do not use internet access from parents' home	2%(2%/ 2%)
Dial-Up	1%(0%/ 0%)

Table 25	Computer Usage on Campus
	2022(2020/2019)
I will bring a laptop computer or tablet computer	76%(85%/ 86%)
I will bring a computer but do not know what type	11%(8%/ 7%)
I will bring a desktop and laptop computer or tablet computer	10%(5%/ 5%)
I will bring a desktop computer	3%(2%/ 2%)
I do not plan to bring a computer	1%(1%/ 1%)

Table 26	Printer Needs on Campus
	2022(2020/2019)
I will use a printer supplied in a lab	77%(62%/ 60%)
I will bring a printer to campus	17%(31%/ 34%)
I will use a friend's printer	4%(5%/ 5%)
I do not need a printer	3%(2%/ 2%)

Table 27	College Credit Hours Earned in High School
	2022(2020/2019)
1-3 hours	6%(8%/ 38%)
4-10 hours	15%(33%/ 33%)
11-20 hours	13%(32%/ 18%)
21-30 hours	6%(12%/ 6%)
31 or more hours	5%(15%/ 6%)

Table 28	Positive Work Ethics Most Like Me
	2022(2020/2019)
I am a hard worker	52%(53%/ 54%)
I am diligent	41%(42%/ 43%)
I have achieved a goal that took years of work	39%(39%/ 38%)
I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge	34%(34%/ 35%)
I finish whatever I begin	27%(29%/ 31%)
Setbacks don't discourage me	14%(16%/ 16%)

Table 29	Negative Work Ethics Most Like Me
	2022(2020/2019)
I become interested in new pursuits every few months	15%(13%/ 12%)
New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones	12%(12%/ 10%)
I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete	11%(9%/ 8%)
My interests change from year to year	9%(7%/ 7%)
I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest	9%(8%/ 7%)
I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one	5%(4%/ 4%)