

## **TRANSFER STUDENT SURVEY February 2021**

This report shares information with the university community about James Madison University (JMU) transfer students' attitudes, values, perceptions and experiences.

JMU requested incoming transfer students to complete the Transfer Student Survey online. The survey collects responses to questions about respondents' decision to attend college and, more specifically, James Madison University; their experiences at other institutions; and their attitudes, values and beliefs. Demographic data were also requested.

The data was obtained via the 584 usable surveys from the incoming transfer students.

### **TRANSFER STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS**

Transfer students identify as the following genders: 54% female, 45% male, and 1% non-binary and/or non-confirming (Table 1). Eighty-one percent of this year's respondents indicated that their age was between 19-21 years old (Table 2). Caucasian was the most reported race at 75%, this was followed by Latino/Hispanic at 7%, African-American/Black and Asian/Pacific Islander both at 6%, Asian/Pacific Islander at 4%, Multiracial at 5%, and 2% other (Table 3). Ninety-two percent of respondents reported living in the state of Virginia and 8% from out of state (Table 4). Twenty percent reported to be first generation (Table 6).

### **PREVIOUS INSTITUTIONS**

Half of this year's transfer students have already received an associate's degree before transferring to JMU; 28% reported attending a community college but did not receive an associate's degree (Table 7). Seventy percent of respondents reported transferring from a 2-year public institution, 19% from a 4-year public institution (Table 8). Ninety percent of respondents indicated that they had a GPA of 3.00 or higher from their previous institution (Table 9). Respondents were also asked if there was interaction with a JMU transfer advisor. Of the 48% who reported consulting with a transfer advisor coordinator; 98% reported that the information received was helpful with their transition to JMU (Table 10 and 11).

### **IDENTIFY AS JMU STUDENT VS TRANSFER STUDENT**

Respondents were asked when they felt they would identify as a JMU student and not as a transfer student. Forty percent of respondents reported that they would identify as a JMU student on the first day of their first semester, 23% after the completion of their first semester, 18% reported midway through their first semester at JMU (Table 12).

### **ACCLIMATION TO JMU**

Ninety-five percent of respondents are enthusiastic about JMU and 93% said they were happy to be at JMU; 82% of respondents believe that JMU is one of the best schools in the nation. Eighty percent of transfer students see themselves as part of the JMU community and 77% feel a sense of belonging to JMU (Table 13).

## PHILOSOPHIES OF EDUCATION

Incoming transfer students were asked to indicate their own philosophies concerning the emphasis of higher education. Forty-seven percent of this year’s respondents said they hold a vocational philosophy of education, which is viewed as preparation for an occupation. Twenty-five percent of respondents hold an intellectual philosophy, where emphasis is placed on scholarly pursuit of knowledge (Table 14). Fifty-six percent of respondents plan to pursue a degree beyond the baccalaureate (Table 5).

Listed in the following tables are summaries of data collected in 2020 (2019, 2018 and 2017 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](mailto:ask-oir@jmu.edu).

<b>Table 1</b>	<b>Gender of the Respondents</b>
	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
Female	54%( 54%/ 46%/ 48%)
Male	45%( 45%/ 50%/ 52%)
Non-binary/Non-confirming	1%( 1%/ ---/ ---)
Transgender	0%( 0%/ ---/ ---)
Other	0%( 0%/ ---/ ---)

<b>Table 2</b>	<b>Age of the Respondents</b>
	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
18 years or less	3%( 2%/ 4%/ 3%)
19 years old	29%( 25%/ 25%/ 25%)
20 years old	39%( 33%/ 37%/ 34%)
21 years old	13%( 19%/ 15%/ 18%)
22 years old	6%( 8%/ 6%/ 7%)
23 years old or older	11%( 13%/ 12%/ 14%)

<b>Table 3</b>	<b>Race of the Respondents</b>
	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
Caucasian-American/White	75%( 75%/ 74%/ 75%)
Hispanic	7%( 8%/ 8%/ 7%)
African-American/Black	6%( 6%/ 5%/ 6%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	6%( 4%/ 6%/ 6%)
Multiracial	5%( 6%/ 5%/ 5%)
Other	2%( 2%/ 2%/ 2%)
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0%( 0%/ 5%/ 0%)

<b>Table 4</b>	<b>Region of Current Family Residence</b>
	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
Northern Virginia	34%( 38%/ 38%/ 38%)
Shenandoah Valley	25%( 27%/ 24%/ 23%)
Piedmont Area	18%( 17%/ 15%/ 14%)
Tidewater Area	10%( 9%/ 11%/ 10%)
Outside Virginia	8%( 6%/ 7%/ 9%)
Southwest Virginia	5%( 4%/ 5%/ 6%)
Outside the United States	0%( 0%/ 0%/ 1%)

<b>Table 5</b>	<b>Highest Academic Degree Respondents Intend to Obtain</b>
	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
Baccalaureate degree	44%( 42%/ 41%/ 34%)
Master’s degree	40%( 44%/ 42%/ 47%)
Specialist degree e.g., Ed.S.	0%( 0%/ 1%/ 1%)
Doctoral degree e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., D.B.A.	9%( 9%/ 10%/ 11%)
Professional degree e.g., medicine, law, theology	6%( 6%/ 7%/ 8%)
Not a degree seeking student	1%( 0%/ 0%/ 0%)

<b>Table 6</b>	<b>First Generation Status</b>
	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
No	71%( ---/ ---/ ---)
Yes	20%( ---/ ---/ ---)
Unknown/Unreported	8%( ---/ ---/ ---)

<b>Table 7</b>	<b>Associates Degree Completion</b>	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
Received Associates degree	50%	( 55%/ 51%/ 51%)
Attended community college, but have not received an Associate's degree	28%	( 29%/ 28%/ 29%)
Did not attend a community college	22%	( 16%/ 21%/ 20%)

<b>Table 8</b>	<b>Institution Transferring From</b>	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
2-year public	70%	( 76%/ 71%/ 73%)
2-year private	1%	( 0%/ 1%/ 1%)
4-year public	19%	( 15%/ 18%/ 20%)
4-year private	7%	( 7%/ 7%/ 7%)
Other	3%	( 3%/ 3%/ 2%)

<b>Table 9</b>	<b>GPA from Previous Institution</b>	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
3.50 – 4.00	44%	( 43%/ 42%/ 39%)
3.00 – 3.49	46%	( 47%/ 48%/ 50%)
2.50 – 2.99	10%	( 10%/ 10%/ 11%)
2.00 – 2.49	1%	( 1%/ 0%/ 0%)
Less than 2.00	0%	( 0%/ 0%/ 0%)

<b>Table 10</b>	<b>Consult with JMU Transfer Advisor</b>	2020(2019/ 2018/2017)
No	52%	( 42%/ 51%/ 54%)
Yes	48%	( 53%/ 49%/ 46%)

<b>Table 11</b>	<b>Information received from Transfer Advisor helpful</b>	2020(2019/ 2018/2017)
Yes	98%	( 98%/ 96%/ 96%)
No	3%	( 1% 2%/ 2%)
NA	0%	( 1% 1%/ 2%)

<b>Table 12</b>	<b>Identify as JMU Student vs Transfer Student</b>	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
First day of my first semester at JMU	40%	( 37%/ 37%/ 41%)
After the completion of first semester at JMU	23%	( 24%/ 25%/ 24%)

Midway through my first semester at JMU	18%	( 18%/ 18%/ 18%)
Not sure	9%	( 9%/ 7%/ 0%)
Always identify as a transfer student	5%	( 9%/ 6%/ 7%)
After the completion of two semesters at JMU	5%	( 3%/ 5%/ 3%)

<b>Table 13</b>	<b>Sense of Belonging to JMU (Percentage of Respondents Who Agree to Some Extent on the Following)</b>	2020(2019/ 2018/2017)
Enthusiastic about JMU	95%	( 90%/ 87%/ 88%)
Happy to be at JMU	93%	( 88%/ 84%/ 85%)
Believe JMU is one of the best schools in the nation	82%	( 71%/ 73%/ 73%)
See myself as a member of the JMU community	80%	( 70%/ 68%/ 69%)
Sense of belonging	77%	( 63%/ 65%/ 64%)
Feel a part of the JMU community	75%	( 60%/ 63%/ 69%)

<b>Table 14</b>	<b>Philosophy of Education</b>	2020(2019/ 2018/2017)
Vocational philosophy education viewed as preparation for an occupation	47%	( 53%/ 49%/ 53%)
Intellectual philosophy emphasis on scholarly pursuit of knowledge	25%	( 23%/ 24%/ 22%)
Social philosophy social life and loyalty to college emphasized	20%	( 17%/ 20%/ 21%)
Artistic philosophy emphasis on ideas, art forms, individuality	8%	( 7%/ 7%/ 5%)

<b>Table 15</b>	<b>Positive Work Ethics Most Like Me</b>	2020(2019/ 2018/ 2017)
I am a hard worker	62%	( 63%/ ---/ ---)
I have achieved a goal that took years of work	51%	( 47%/ ---/ ---)
I am diligent	50%	( 47%/ ---/ ---)
I have overcome setbacks to conquer an important challenge	49%	( 41%/ ---/ ---)
I finish whatever I begin	36%	( 34%/ ---/ ---)
Setbacks don't discourage me	18%	( 13%/ ---/ ---)

**Table 16****Negative Work Ethics Most Like Me**

	2020	(2019/ 2018/2017)		
I become interested in new pursuits every few months	16%	( 14%/	---/	---)
New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones	9%	( 9%/	---/	---)
I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete	6%	( 4%/	---/	---)
I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest	6%	( 6%/	---/	---)
My interests change from year to year	5%	( 6%/	---/	---)
I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one	4%	( 2%/	---/	---)