

## **Cal Poly Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2001**

For the third year, Institutional Planning & Analysis (IP&A) conducted a survey of undergraduates who enrolled in the prior Fall who did not return in Fall. As in the first two years of the study, students offered a variety of reasons why they chose not to enroll at Cal Poly, to change to another educational institution, or to not attend any institution for a period of time.

### **Methodology**

The same methodology was used for all three yearly surveys. The non-returning student or a proxy (parents, siblings, roommates) was interviewed by telephone. Cal Poly students, hired to conduct the interviews, used a checklist to record responses, with areas to record additional comments or responses not listed on the instrument.

The group of students to be contacted was determined by comparing the undergraduate student population enrolled in Fall 2000 with the population enrolled in Fall 2001 using a unique ID number. Certain groups of students who did not enroll for Fall 2001 were not contacted. These included:

- Students on university approved leave;
- Students with an “off-site” flag, but not enrolled;
- Students who had been academically disqualified and not re-instated;
- Students who had their degrees posted up until the date the list was pulled (degrees are posted daily);
- Students who were deceased.

For the Fall 2001 survey, 1,347 students fit the criteria and were included in the population. Interviewers reached about 40 percent of these students. This population was grouped into twelve cells: by college and by matriculation into Cal Poly as a first-time freshman or transfer student.

### **University Wide Results**

- Personal reasons (grouping all responses in the “personal reasons” category) topped the list with 26.2 percent of those contacted indicating that one or more personal reasons (ranging from unanticipated financial hardship, to medical problems, to simply taking a break) had influenced their decision to not return to Cal Poly on a temporary or permanent basis.
- In the categories grouped under “Cal Poly Related Reasons,” Senior Project was the top reason given for leaving Cal Poly without obtaining a degree. 14.7 percent of those contacted said that they still had to complete their Senior Project or the project was somewhere in the process of being finalized.
- Major related problems (problems changing majors or desired major not offered at Cal Poly) were cited by 11.1 percent of the respondents.
- Students involved in some type of Internship/Coop or other educationally-related activity (for which they were not registered in Fall), accounted for 12.2 percent of the responses.
- “Housing Problems” accounted for a growing percentage of the responses with 3.8 percent of this year’s responses (compared with 2.3 percent last year and 1.8 percent in Fall 1999).

Once again, these results varied – sometimes significantly – by College. Individual College data is shown in the attached tables.

After three years responses in some categories show an emerging trend. Other categories have yet to develop a discernible trend for why students leave Cal Poly without completing a degree. Both kinds of information, however, can begin to assist in identifying areas appropriate for university or college based interventions.

**Cal Poly**  
**Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2001**  
**University Totals**

**Number in Non-Returning Population**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total
FTF	1,028	76.3%
Transfers	319	23.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,347</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Number Interviewed**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total	Percent of Population
FTF	401	75.0	39.0%
Transfers	134	25.0	42.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39.7%</b>

"Number in Non-Returning Population" indicates the total number of non-returning students by matriculation (FTF or Transfer), and the percent of each. "Number Interviewed" displays the number of students actually interviewed (FTF and Transfer), the percent of each, and the percent of the total population of non-returning students contacted.

**Students Attending Other Institutions**

	Number
Other CSU	42
Community College	49
Other Institutions	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>

**Intend to Return to Cal Poly**

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	93	18	111
Undetermined	42	2	44
No	160	28	188
Missing	106	86	192
<b>Total</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>535</b>

Note: Not all students responded to these inquiries. The "intend to return" data may be influenced by the students who have only senior project or a single class as a remaining degree requirement. The majority of these students would not re-enroll.

**Response Categories**

		Entered As		Total	Percent
		FTF	Transfers		
<b>Personal</b>		116	30	146	26.2%
<b>Employment/Internship/Coop</b>		51	17	68	12.2%
<b>Cal Poly Related</b>					
	Senior Project	52	30	82	14.7%
	Unmet Requirements				
	GWR	8	3	11	2.0%
	Other Academic Problems	34	15	49	8.8%
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)	54	8	62	11.1%
	Scheduling	15	6	21	3.8%
	Financial Aid	4	1	5	0.9%
	Physical Environment	11	0	11	2.0%
	Housing Problems	19	2	21	3.8%
<b>Graduated</b> (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		56	25	81	14.5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>420</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Note: Responses exceed respondents due to multiple reasons per respondent. Responses are grouped; detail available upon request. Several of these groups contain a small number of students, so the behavior of a few students can affect the percentages dramatically.

**Response Summary:**

- Universitywide, this is the third year that "personal reasons" has led the list as the greatest motivating factor for students not returning. This was the most often cited category of reasons for students in all of the colleges.
- For the third year, "senior project" was the highest single reason ("personal reasons" is a combined percentage for various responses). The percentage of responses was consistent with last year's results.
- The percentage of problems arising from a student's major (inability to change, etc.) was similar to last year's results (11.6%) at 11.1%.
- "Housing problems" increased for the third year, from 1.8% (Fall 1999), to 2.3% (Fall 2000), and 3.8% (Fall 2001).
- Additionally, the percentage of students citing "employment/internship/coop," "GWR," or "financial aid" as reasons for not returning all increased again for the third year.

**Cal Poly**  
**Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2001**  
**College of Agriculture**

**Number in Non-Returning Population**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total
FTF	247	73.7%
Transfers	88	26.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Number Interviewed**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total	Percent of Population
FTF	97	69.3	39.3%
Transfers	43	30.7	48.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>41.8%</b>

"Number in Non-Returning Population" indicates the total number of non-returning students by matriculation (FTF or Transfer), and the percent of each. "Number Interviewed" displays the number of students actually interviewed (FTF and Transfer), the percent of each, and the percent of the total population of non-returning students contacted in this college.

**Students Attending Other Institutions**

	Number
Other CSU	11
Community College	18
Other Institutions	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>

**Intend to Return to Cal Poly**

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	30	1	31
Undetermined	15	0	15
No	49	0	49
Missing	3	42	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>140</b>

Note: Not all students responded to these inquiries. The "intend to return" data may be influenced by the students who have only senior project or a single class as a remaining degree requirement. The majority of these students would not re-enroll.

**Response Categories**

		Entered As		Total	Percent	
		FTF	Transfers			
<b>Personal</b>		36	8	44	29.5%	
<b>Employment/Internship/Coop</b>		14	6	20	13.4%	
<b>Cal Poly Related</b>	Senior Project	9	13	22	14.8%	
	Unmet Requirements	GWR	1	1	2	1.3%
		Other Academic Problems	2	1	3	2.0%
		Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)	17	3	20	13.4%
	Scheduling	6	0	6	4.0%	
	Financial Aid	1	0	1	0.7%	
	Physical Environment	3	0	3	2.0%	
Housing Problems	8	0	8	5.4%		
<b>Graduated</b> (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		11	9	20	13.4%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>108</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Note: Responses exceed respondents due to multiple reasons per respondent. Responses are grouped; detail available upon request. Several of these groups contain a small number of students, so the behavior of a few students can affect the percentages dramatically.

**Response Summary:**

- This year, the percentage of CAGR students naming "personal reasons" as their motivation for leaving Cal Poly was the second highest among the colleges. Last year, CAGR students cited this with less frequency than any other college (28.0%).
- 14.8% of CAGR students named "senior project" as an incomplete requirement, about the same as all students contacted (14.7% overall). Academic issues including "senior project," "GWR," and "other academic problems" accounted for 18.1% of the responses, the lowest percentage for all the colleges.
- Problems changing major or leaving Cal Poly to attend another institution with a more suitable major accounted for 13.4% of responses, second highest among the colleges and higher than the overall average (11.1%).
- CAGR students list housing problems more often than students in any other college.

**Cal Poly**  
**Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2001**  
**College of Architecture and Environmental Design**

**Number in Non-Returning Population**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total
FTF	76	63.3%
Transfers	44	36.7%
Total	120	100.0%

**Number Interviewed**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total	Percent of Population
FTF	28	59.6	36.8%
Transfers	19	40.4	43.2%
Total	47	100.0	39.2%

"Number in Non-Returning Population" indicates the total number of non-returning students by matriculation (FTF or Transfer), and the percent of each. "Number Interviewed" displays the number of students actually interviewed (FTF and Transfer), the percent of each, and the percent of the total population of non-returning students contacted in this college.

**Students Attending Other Institutions**

	Number
Other CSU	2
Community College	2
Other Institutions	6
Total	10

**Intend to Return to Cal Poly**

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	7	0	7
Undetermined	2	1	3
No	15	3	18
Missing	4	15	19
Total	28	19	47

Note: Not all students responded to these inquiries. The "intend to return" data may be influenced by the students who have only senior project or a single class as a remaining degree requirement. The majority of these students would not re-enroll.

**Response Categories**

		Entered As		Total	Percent
		FTF	Transfers		
<b>Personal</b>		6	3	9	19.1%
<b>Employment/Internship/Coop</b>		5	3	8	17.0%
<b>Cal Poly Related</b>	Senior Project	3	3	6	12.8%
	Unmet Requirements				
	GWR	2	1	3	6.4%
	Other Academic Problems	3	2	5	10.6%
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)	7	1	8	17.0%
	Scheduling	0	2	2	4.3%
	Financial Aid	0	0	0	0.0%
	Physical Environment	0	0	0	0.0%
Housing Problems	1	0	1	2.1%	
<b>Graduated</b> (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		1	4	5	10.6%
<b>Total</b>		28	19	47	100.0%

Note: Responses exceed respondents due to multiple reasons per respondent. Responses are grouped; detail available upon request. Several of these groups contain a small number of students, so the behavior of a few students can affect the percentages dramatically.

**Response Summary:**

- CAED students cited "personal reasons" less frequently than in any of the other colleges, except CSM, with whom they tied at 19.1% of students' responses.
- CAED students cited Cal Poly-related reasons (not including "senior project") as a reason for leaving Cal Poly at a higher rate than students overall (37.4% CAED, 32.4% overall). CAED students had the highest percentage of responses in two categories: problems satisfying the GWR, and problems changing major or leaving Cal Poly to attend another institution with a more suitable major.
- 17.0% of responses indicated "employment/internship/coop" as a reason for not returning. This could indicate that students are finding employment before they graduate, or are involved in internships without being "officially" registered for the term. CAED tied with CBUS for the highest response rate for this category among the colleges.

**Cal Poly**  
**Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2001**  
**College of Business**

**Number in Non-Returning Population**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total
FTF	100	82.6%
Transfers	21	17.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Number Interviewed**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total	Percent of Population
FTF	47	90.4	47.0%
Transfers	5	9.6	23.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>43.0%</b>

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**Students Attending Other Institutions**

	Number
Other CSU	4
Community College	4
Other Institutions	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>

**Intend to Return to Cal Poly**

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	4	1	5
Undetermined	3	1	4
No	3	0	3
Missing	37	3	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>52</b>

Note: Not all students responded to these inquiries. The "intend to return" data may be influenced by the students who have only senior project or a single class as a remaining degree requirement. The majority of these students would not re-enroll.

**Response Categories**

		Entered As		Total	Percent	
		FTF	Transfers			
<b>Personal</b>		16	3	19	35.8%	
<b>Employment/Internship/Coop</b>		8	1	9	17.0%	
<b>Cal Poly Related</b>	Senior Project	2	0	2	3.8%	
	Unmet Requirements	GWR	2	0	2	3.8%
		Other Academic Problems	6	0	6	11.3%
		Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)	2	0	2	3.8%
	Scheduling	3	1	4	7.5%	
	Financial Aid	0	0	0	0.0%	
	Physical Environment	1	0	1	1.9%	
	Housing Problems	1	0	1	1.9%	
<b>Graduated</b> (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		7	0	7	13.2%	
<b>Total</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	

Note: Responses exceed respondents due to multiple reasons per respondent. Responses are grouped; detail available upon request. Several of these groups contain a small number of students, so the behavior of a few students can affect the percentages dramatically.

**Response Summary:**

- CBUS students cited "personal reasons" more frequently than in any of the other colleges and at a much greater frequency than the total student average (26.2%).
- Students also indicated "scheduling" problems more often than any other college.
- The percentage of responses having to do with "senior project" ranked the lowest for the colleges (with 3.8%), as did responses indicating problems with students' majors (also 3.8%). This ranking is consistent with last year's results.
- 17.0% of responses indicated "employment/internship/coop" as a reason for not returning. This could indicate that students are finding employment before they graduate, or are involved in internships without being "officially" registered for the term. CBUS tied with CAED for the highest response rate for this category among the colleges.

**Cal Poly**  
**Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2001**  
**College of Engineering**

**Number in Non-Returning Population**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total
FTF	341	88.8%
Transfers	43	11.2%
Total	384	100.0%

**Number Interviewed**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total	Percent of Population
FTF	131	85.6	38.4%
Transfers	22	14.4	51.2%
Total	153	100.0	39.8%

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**Students Attending Other Institutions**

	Number
Other CSU	12
Community College	20
Other Institutions	13
Total	45

**Intend to Return to Cal Poly**

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	36	8	44
Undetermined	14	0	14
No	40	3	43
Missing	41	11	52
Total	131	22	153

Note: Not all students responded to these inquiries. The "intend to return" data may be influenced by the students who have only senior project or a single class as a remaining degree requirement. The majority of these students would not re-enroll.

**Response Categories**

		Entered As		Total	Percent	
		FTF	Transfers			
<b>Personal</b>		32	4	36	22.6%	
<b>Employment/Internship/Coop</b>		18	7	25	15.7%	
<b>Cal Poly Related</b>	Senior Project	16	3	19	11.9%	
	Unmet Requirements	GWR	1	1	2	1.3%
		Other Academic Problems	20	6	26	16.4%
		Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)	21	0	21	13.2%
	Scheduling	3	1	4	2.5%	
	Financial Aid	2	0	2	1.3%	
	Physical Environment	3	0	3	1.9%	
	Housing Problems	5	1	6	3.8%	
<b>Graduated</b> (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		13	2	15	9.4%	
<b>Total</b>		134	25	159	100.0%	

Note: Responses exceed respondents due to multiple reasons per respondent. Responses are grouped; detail available upon request. Several of these groups contain a small number of students, so the behavior of a few students can affect the percentages dramatically.

**Response Summary:**

- CENG students cited "personal reasons" as a reason for leaving Cal Poly at a lower rate than students overall (22.6% CENG, 26.2% overall).
- CENG students cited Cal Poly-related reasons (not including "senior project") as a reason for leaving Cal Poly more than students in any other college. "Other academic problems" were cited by students in the CENG more than any other college. This category also yielded the highest single percentage of responses for CENG students.
- Senior project responses (11.9%) were lower than the university-wide total (14.7%).

**Cal Poly**  
**Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2001**  
**College of Liberal Arts**

**Number in Non-Returning Population**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total
FTF	141	63.2%
Transfers	82	36.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Number Interviewed**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total	Percent of Population
FTF	69	70.4	48.9%
Transfers	29	29.6	35.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>43.9%</b>

*"Number in Non-Returning Population" indicates the total number of non-returning students by matriculation (FTF or Transfer), and the percent of each. "Number Interviewed" displays the number of students actually interviewed (FTF and Transfer), the percent of each, and the percent of the total population of non-returning students contacted in this college.*

**Students Attending Other Institutions**

	Number
Other CSU	13
Community College	3
Other Institutions	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>

**Intend to Return to Cal Poly**

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	12	5	17
Undetermined	7	0	7
No	45	17	62
Missing	5	7	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>98</b>

*Note: Not all students responded to these inquiries. The "intend to return" data may be influenced by the students who have only senior project or a single class as a remaining degree requirement. The majority of these students would not re-enroll.*

**Response Categories**

		Entered As		Total	Percent
		FTF	Transfers		
<b>Personal</b>		19	10	28	28.7%
<b>Employment/Internship/Coop</b>		4	0	4	4.0%
<b>Cal Poly Related</b>	Senior Project	15	4	19	18.8%
	Unmet Requirements				
	GWR	2	0	2	2.0%
	Other Academic Problems	1	3	4	4.0%
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)	3	4	7	6.9%
	Scheduling	3	2	5	5.0%
	Financial Aid	0	1	1	1.0%
	Physical Environment	3	0	3	3.0%
Housing Problems	3	1	4	4.0%	
<b>Graduated</b> (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		18	5	23	22.8%
<b>Total</b>		<b>71</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*Note: Responses exceed respondents due to multiple reasons per respondent. Responses are grouped; detail available upon request. Several of these groups contain a small number of students, so the behavior of a few students can affect the percentages dramatically.*

**Response Summary:**

- CLA students cited "personal reasons" as a reason for leaving Cal Poly at a slightly higher rate than students overall (28.7% CLA, 26.2% overall).
- The percentage of CLA students indicating "employment/internship/coop" was the lowest among the colleges.
- CLA students listing "major problems" were second lowest among the colleges.
- 18.8% of CLA students' responses listed "senior project" as an incomplete requirement. This is second highest among the colleges and higher than students overall (14.7%).

**Cal Poly**  
**Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2001**  
**College of Science and Mathematics**

**Number in Non-Returning Population**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total
FTF	123	75.0%
Transfers	41	25.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Number Interviewed**

Entered As	Number	Percent of total	Percent of Population
FTF	29	65.9	23.6%
Transfers	15	34.1	36.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>26.8%</b>

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**Students Attending Other Institutions**

	Number
Other CSU	0
Community College	2
Other Institutions	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>

**Intend to Return to Cal Poly**

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	4	3	7
Undetermined	1	0	1
No	8	5	13
Missing	16	7	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>44</b>

Note: Not all students responded to these inquiries. The "intend to return" data may be influenced by the students who have only senior project or a single class as a remaining degree requirement. The majority of these students would not re-enroll.

**Response Categories**

		Entered As		Total	Percent
		FTF	Transfers		
<b>Personal</b>		7	2	9	19.1%
<b>Employment/Internship/Coop</b>		2	0	2	4.3%
<b>Cal Poly Related</b>	Senior Project	7	7	14	29.8%
	Unmet Requirements				
	GWR	0	0	0	0.0%
	Other Academic Problems	2	3	5	10.6%
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)	4	0	4	8.5%
	Scheduling	0	0	0	0.0%
	Financial Aid	1	0	1	2.1%
Physical Environment	1	0	1	2.1%	
Housing Problems	1	0	1	2.1%	
<b>Graduated</b> (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		6	4	10	21.3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Note: Responses exceed respondents due to multiple reasons per respondent. Responses are grouped; detail available upon request. Several of these groups contain a small number of students, so the behavior of a few students can affect the percentages dramatically.

**Response Summary:**

- CSM students cited "personal reasons" less frequently than in any of the other colleges, except CAED, with whom they tied at 19.1%.
- CSM students indicating "Cal Poly-related" reasons (not including "senior project"), "scheduling" problems, and "GWR" were the lowest among the colleges.
- 29.8% of the students contacted named "senior project" as an incomplete requirement, the highest response rate among the colleges. CSM students also cited "financial aid" problems more often than students in any other college.