

Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey
Fall 2002

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**Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey
Three-Year Trends**

	Fall Data Collection		
	2000	2001	2002
<i>Number Interviewed</i>	525	535	546
<u>Category of Reason Given</u>			
Personal	31.3%	26.2%	31.7%
Employment/Internship/CoOp	10.1%	12.2%	9.4%
Unmet Cal Poly Requirements			
Senior Project	16.2%	14.7%	11.4%
GWR	1.7%	2.0%	2.6%
Other Academic Problems	13.9%	8.8%	18.1%
Major (problems changing/not offered)	11.6%	11.1%	13.8%
Scheduling (couldn't get classes)	2.3%	3.8%	3.7%
Financial Aid	0.8%	0.9%	2.2%
Physical Environment (campus, town)	3.4%	2.0%	1.5%
Housing Problems	2.3%	3.8%	1.7%
Sub-Total	93.6%	85.5%	96.1%
Student says graduated – degree not posted	6.4%	14.5%	3.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The percentages displayed above are the results from the last three years of the Non-Returning Student Survey. While the same methodology was used in each of the fall collections, differences from year to year may have to do with individual interviewer's selection of a category, and/or the ability to contact the actual non-returning students as opposed to a proxy (e.g. parent). While Institutional Planning and Analysis staff are aware that the data collected is entirely qualitative, it is hoped that this information will provide a better picture of why students leave Cal Poly without obtaining their degree than was previously available.

Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey
Fall 2002

For the fourth year, Institutional Planning & Analysis (IP&A) conducted a survey of undergraduates who were enrolled in the prior Fall, but did not return in the next Fall. As in the previous 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

Each year the methodology used to conduct surveys was the same. The non-returning student or a proxy (parent, sibling, roommate) 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 contacted was determined by comparing the undergraduate student population enrolled in Fall 2001 with the population enrolled in Fall 2002 using a unique ID number. Certain groups of students who did not enroll for Fall 2002 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 2002 survey, 1,377 students fit the criteria and were included in the population to be contacted. This population was grouped into twelve cells: by college and by matriculation into Cal Poly as a first-time freshman or transfer student. Interviewers were able to solicit responses from about 40% of these students or their proxies. (Qualitative, narrative responses were subjectively categorized into a list of previously identified possible reasons.)

University Wide Results

- As in past years, responses that fall under the combined grouping “Personal Reasons” were the most frequent reasons given by students for leaving Cal Poly either on a temporary or permanent basis. About 32% of those contacted indicated that one or more “personal reasons” (ranging from unanticipated financial hardship, to medical problems, to simply taking a break) had influenced their decision not to return.
- About 14% of the students indicated that major related reasons (could not change, better major elsewhere) caused them to leave.
- The percentage giving “senior project” as a reason for leaving before receiving their degree was 11.4%, lower than in previous years.
- Housing problems such as housing being unavailable, unpleasant, or inadequate accounted for a lower percentage this year (1.7%), which was down from the 3.8% recorded last year (previous years had been 2.3 and 1.8%).

As in past years, these results varied – sometimes significantly – by college. Individual college data is shown in the attached tables.

This was the fourth year that IP&A has conducted the survey. The results in some of the categories have varied markedly from year to year. This may be a function of inconsistencies among the interviewers and their interpretation of responses, that students’ reasons for leaving change every year, or that we contact a different section of the population each year. The exact reasons are unknown. IP&A does hope, however, that this information can assist in identifying areas appropriate for university or college based interventions.

Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2002
University Totals

Number in Non-Returning Population

Entered As	Number	Percent
FTF	1,049	76.2%
Transfers	328	23.8%
Total	1,377	100.0%

Number Interviewed

Entered As	Number	Percent	Percent of Population
FTF	424	77.4	40.4%
Transfers	122	22.6	37.2%
Total	546	100.0	39.7%

"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	54
Community College	101
Other Institutions	40
Total	195

Intend to Return to Cal Poly

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	128	34	162
Undetermined	52	6	58
No	234	67	301
Missing	10	15	25
Total	424	122	546

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				
		FTF	Transfers	Total	Percent	
Personal		141	31	172	31.7%	
Employment/Internship/Coop		40	11	51	9.4%	
Cal Poly Related	Unmet Requirements	Senior Project	37	25	62	11.4%
		GWR	9	5	14	2.6%
		Other Academic Problems	76	22	98	18.1%
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)		67	8	75	13.8%
	Scheduling		18	2	20	3.7%
	Financial Aid		8	4	12	2.2%
Physical Environment		8	0	8	1.5%	
Housing Problems		7	2	9	1.7%	
Graduated (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		11	10	21	3.9%	
Total		422	120	542	100.0%	

Note: 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" (such as family issues, medical problems, unanticipated financial problems, needed a break) has led the list as the greatest motivating factor why students leave Cal Poly without obtaining a degree.
- "Other academic problems" rose to 18.1% (from 8.8% in Fall 2001) to the most frequently cited single response. Students in this category cited such reasons as needing a single course or a few remaining units which they are taking at a junior college. Others are awaiting paperwork processing. A possible reason for the increase in this area is that it may have become a subjective depository for difficult-to-categorize responses.
- The percentage of problems arising from a student's major (inability to change, etc.) increased from 10.4% in Fall 2001 to 13.8%.
- "Senior project" decreased from 14.7% in Fall 2001 to 11.4% as a universitywide response.
- Students citing "employment/internship/coop" decreased from 12.2% in Fall 2001 to 9.4% this year.
- "Financial aid" responses increased from 0.9% (the lowest single category of responses in Fall 2001) to 2.2% this year.

Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2002
College of Agriculture

Number in Non-Returning Population

Entered As	Number	Percent
FTF	243	73.2%
Transfers	89	26.8%
Total	332	100.0%

Number Interviewed

Entered As	Number	Percent	Percent of Population
FTF	96	76.6	39.5%
Transfers	29	23.4	32.6%
Total	125	100.0	37.7%

"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	15
Community College	22
Other Institutions	8
Total	45

Intend to Return to Cal Poly

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	34	8	42
Undetermined	10	0	10
No	51	14	65
Missing	1	7	8
Total	96	29	125

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			
Personal		45	4	49	39.5%	
Employment/Internship/Coop		11	3	14	11.3%	
Cal Poly Related	Unmet Requirements	Senior Project	8	6	14	11.3%
		GWR	5	1	6	4.8%
		Other Academic Problems	10	7	17	13.7%
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)		8	3	11	8.9%
	Scheduling		3	0	3	2.4%
	Financial Aid		1	1	2	1.6%
	Physical Environment		1	0	1	0.8%
Housing Problems		1	0	1	0.8%	
Graduated (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		3	3	6	4.8%	
Total		96	28	124	100.0%	

Note: 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:

- For the second year in a row, CAGR students named "personal reasons" as the most common reason for leaving Cal Poly, more than any other category (39.5%) and at a much higher rate than Fall 2001 (29.5%).
- "Other academic problems" jumped into the second highest response rate with 13.7% (up from 2.0% in Fall 2001).
- "Employment/internship/coop" and problems with "senior project" were each responsible for 11.3% of responses.
- CAGR students list problems satisfying the GWR more often than students in any other college.

Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2002
College of Architecture and Environmental Design

Number in Non-Returning Population

Entered As	Number	Percent
FTF	76	72.4%
Transfers	29	27.6%
Total	105	100.0%

Number Interviewed

Entered As	Number	Percent	Percent of Population
FTF	29	69.0	38.2%
Transfers	12	31.0	41.4%
Total	41	100.0	39.0%

"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	6
Community College	5
Other Institutions	4
Total	15

Intend to Return to Cal Poly

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	5	0	5
Undetermined	4	0	4
No	19	11	30
Missing	1	1	2
Total	29	12	41

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			
Personal		7	1	8	20.0%	
Employment/Internship/Coop		3	0	3	7.5%	
Cal Poly Related	Unmet Requirements	Senior Project	0	0	0	0.0%
		GWR	0	1	1	2.5%
		Other Academic Problems	5	6	11	27.5%
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)		8	1	9	22.5%
	Scheduling		2	0	2	5.0%
	Financial Aid		1	0	1	2.5%
Physical Environment		1	0	1	2.5%	
Housing Problems		0	0	0	0.0%	
Graduated (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		2	2	4	10.0%	
Total		29	11	40	100.0%	

Note: 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 listed reasons grouped into "Cal Poly related" problems more than any other college (62.5%). "Other academic problems" (such as finishing a final course or submitting course substitution paperwork to evaluations) were cited more frequently than any other single response for CAED students (a 27.5% response rate).
- Problems changing major or leaving Cal Poly to attend another institution with a more suitable major accounted for 22.5% of responses for CAED students and were cited more often by CAED than any other college.
- "Personal reasons" were cited less frequently for CAED students than by students in any other college.
- No CAED students responding to this survey indicated that "senior project" was a reason for leaving Cal Poly without obtaining a degree.

Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2002
College of Business

Number in Non-Returning Population

Entered As	Number	Percent
FTF	101	69.2%
Transfers	45	30.8%
Total	146	100.0%

Number Interviewed

Entered As	Number	Percent	Percent of Population
FTF	37	68.5	36.6%
Transfers	17	31.5	37.8%
Total	54	100.0	37.0%

"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	5
Community College	6
Other Institutions	5
Total	16

Intend to Return to Cal Poly

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	11	7	18
Undetermined	6	1	7
No	17	9	26
Missing	3	0	3
Total	37	17	54

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			
Personal		13	5	18	33.3%	
Employment/Internship/Coop		4	3	7	13.0%	
Cal Poly Related	Unmet Requirements	Senior Project	4	4	10	18.5%
		GWR	1	1	2	3.7%
		Other Academic Problems	4	0	4	7.4%
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)		4	2	6	11.1%
	Scheduling		3	0	3	5.6%
	Financial Aid		0	1	1	1.9%
	Physical Environment		1	0	1	1.9%
Housing Problems		1	0	1	1.9%	
Graduated (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		0	1	1	1.9%	
Total		37	17	54	100.0%	

Note: 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:

- "Personal reasons" were the highest response category for CBUS students at 33.3%, about the same as universitywide (31.7%).
- For the second year in a row, CBUS students listed "scheduling" problems more than students in any other college (5.6% of responses in Fall 2002 and 7.5% in Fall 2001).
- "Senior project" was responsible for 18.5% of the responses, a substantial increase from 3.8% in Fall 2001. (Small numbers may have contributed to this change with 2 of 54 replying "senior project" in 2001, compared to 10 of 54 in 2002.)
- CBUS students cited "other academic problems," such as fulfilling their last remaining units or classes at a local junior college, less frequently than any students in any other college.

Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2002
College of Engineering

Number in Non-Returning Population

Entered As	Number	Percent
FTF	343	86.8%
Transfers	52	13.2%
Total	395	100.0%

Number Interviewed

Entered As	Number	Percent	Percent of Population
FTF	142	88.2	41.4%
Transfers	19	11.8	36.5%
Total	161	100.0	40.8%

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Students Attending Other Institutions

	Number
Other CSU	10
Community College	53
Other Institutions	12
Total	75

Intend to Return to Cal Poly

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	46	3	49
Undetermined	21	0	21
No	72	16	88
Missing	3	0	3
Total	142	19	161

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			
Personal		31	4	35	22.0%	
Employment/Internship/Coop		10	2	12	7.5%	
Cal Poly Related	Unmet Requirements	Senior Project	6	13	8.2%	
		GWR	0	2	1.3%	
		Other Academic Problems	45	3	48	30.2%
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)		31	0	31	19.5%
	Scheduling		4	1	5	3.1%
	Financial Aid		3	0	3	1.9%
Physical Environment		2	0	2	1.3%	
Housing Problems		1	2	3	1.9%	
Graduated (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		4	1	5	3.1%	
Total		140	19	159	100.0%	

Note: 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 Cal Poly-related reasons (including "senior project" and problems with major) as their reasons for leaving Cal Poly more than students in any other college accounting for 67.3% of their total responses. This category contains "other academic problems," (such as one or two remaining courses to be taken at a local junior college) the highest single category for CENG students, at 30.2%.
- "Personal reasons" accounted for 22.0% of the CENG students' responses, about the same rate as Fall 2001.
- "Employment/internship/coop" decreased from 15.7% in Fall 2001 to 7.5% of this year's responses. Some of these students are engaged in an off-campus educational experience for which they are not officially enrolled.
- Almost 20% of the CENG students contacted listed problems with their major (could not change or desired major not offered at Cal Poly) as their reason for leaving Cal Poly without obtaining a degree.

Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2002
College of Liberal Arts

Number in Non-Returning Population

Entered As	Number	Percent
FTF	153	65.9%
Transfers	79	34.1%
Total	232	100.0%

Number Interviewed

Entered As	Number	Percent	Percent of Population
FTF	63	66.0	41.2%
Transfers	32	34.0	40.5%
Total	95	100.0	40.9%

"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	9
Community College	8
Other Institutions	9
Total	26

Intend to Return to Cal Poly

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	19	12	31
Undetermined	7	4	11
No	36	9	45
Missing	1	7	8
Total	63	32	95

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			
Personal		32	14	46	48.4%	
Employment/Internship/Coop		4	1	5	5.3%	
Cal Poly Related	Unmet Requirements	Senior Project	5	11	11.6%	
		GWR	0	1	1.1%	
		Other Academic Problems	4	5	9.5%	
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)		10	2	12	12.6%
	Scheduling		4	1	5	5.3%
	Financial Aid		0	1	1	1.1%
	Physical Environment		0	0	0	0.0%
Housing Problems		1	0	1	1.1%	
Graduated (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		2	2	4	4.2%	
Total		63	32	95	100.0%	

Note: 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:

- Students in CLA cited "personal reasons" most often and highest among the colleges at 48.4%, nearly one-half of their responses.
- Cal Poly-related reasons occurred less frequently for CLA than any other college (at 42.3%) and less frequently than Fall 2001 (44.7%).
- The single highest categories for CLA students were problems with their major at 12.6% and "senior project" at 11.6% (both close to the universitywide responses of 13.8% and 11.4%, respectively).
- For the second year, being engaged in "employment/internship/coop" without being officially enrolled accounted for the lowest response of any college.

Cal Poly
Non-Returning Undergraduate Student Survey Fall 2002
College of Science and Mathematics

Number in Non-Returning Population

Entered As	Number	Percent
FTF	133	79.6%
Transfers	34	20.4%
Total	167	100.0%

Number Interviewed

Entered As	Number	Percent	Percent of Population
FTF	57	81.4	42.9%
Transfers	13	18.6	38.2%
Total	70	100.0	41.9%

"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	9
Community College	7
Other Institutions	2
Total	18

Intend to Return to Cal Poly

	FTF	Transfers	Total
Yes	13	4	17
Undetermined	4	1	5
No	39	8	47
Missing	1	0	1
Total	57	13	70

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			
Personal		13	3	16	22.9%	
Employment/Internship/Coop		8	2	10	14.3%	
Cal Poly Related	Unmet Requirements	Senior Project	4	14	20.0%	
		GWR	1	2	2.9%	
		Other Academic Problems	8	9	12.9%	
	Major (problems changing or not offered at CP)		6	0	6	8.6%
	Scheduling		2	0	2	2.9%
	Financial Aid		3	1	4	5.7%
	Physical Environment		3	0	3	4.3%
Housing Problems		3	0	3	4.3%	
Graduated (Student claimed completion, but degree not posted as of contact date)		0	1	1	1.4%	
Total		57	13	70	100.0%	

Note: 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:

- "Personal reasons" were the highest response category for CSM students at 22.9% of responses.
- CSM students response rate for "senior project" dropped considerably from Fall 2001 (29.8%) to 20.0%. However, for the second year in a row, CSM leads the response rate in this category among the colleges.
- CSM students cited "financial aid," "physical environment," and "housing" problems more than students in any other college. CSM also listed "employment/internship/coop" more often than students in any other college. Some of these students are engaged in an off-campus educational experience for which they are not officially enrolled.
- Problems related to major were reported less frequently for CSM students than students in any other college.