



Survey of Student Enrollment, Fall 2006

At the request of the Academic Senate, a student survey was undertaken to assess students' reasons for enrolling at Gavilan in Fall 2006. Of particular interest was whether recent marketing efforts had an impact on enrollment. A new marketing campaign was embarked upon in Summer 2006. Local television, radio, and print advertisements emphasized the slogan "Big Time Education, Home Town Location."

Survey Administration

The questionnaire designed for this survey consisted of a one-page form asking students to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with fourteen reasons for enrolling this semester. An open-ended response option was provided to gather additional information. Basic demographics were also collected, including gender, ethnicity, age, educational goal, and the number of semesters they had attended Gavilan.

The student sample was drawn from a proportional selection of classes, across all departments, campus locations and day or evening meeting times. For example, the English, Math, CSIS, Physical Education, Music, and Art departments contributed almost 50% of the total number of class offerings this semester. Therefore, more of these courses (in proportion to their representation at each campus) were selected for participation. Oversampling was employed to select evening and distance education classes. One of the rationales for this strategy was to increase the possibility of obtaining a demographically representative sample of students. Instructors for 95 class sections received a letter or email explaining the purpose of the survey and instructions for administering the study. Survey forms, or a link to the online version of the survey, were provided for all those enrolled in each section during the week of October 23 2006, resulting in the distribution of 2000 paper surveys. A total of 970 forms was returned; 955 surveys contained valid responses.

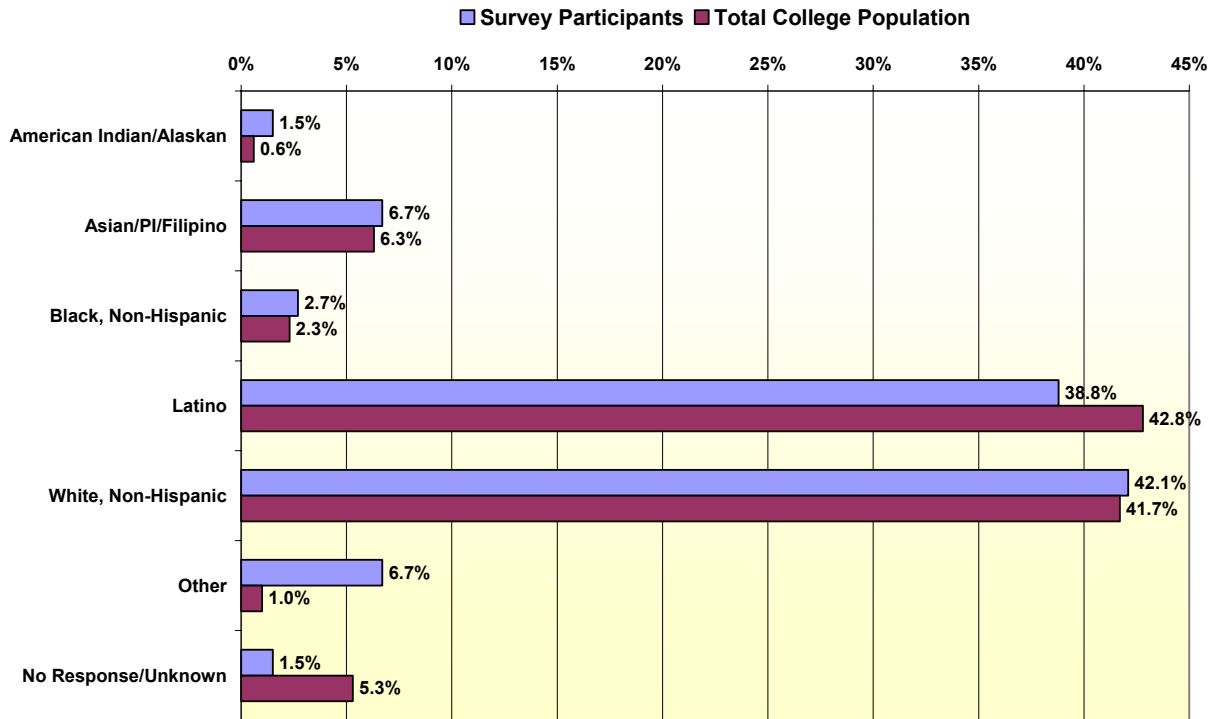
Results

Demographic indicators collected were gender, ethnicity, and age. Information was also obtained on the number of semesters students' had attended Gavilan, day and evening attendance, and whether they had attended another institution last semester. In regard to gender, survey participants were closely representative of the total college population.

Gender			
Survey Participants	Percent	Total College Population	Percent
Female	61.8%	Female	59.3%
Male	37.5%	Male	40.2%
Non-Response	0.7%	Unknown	0.5%

In general, survey participants represented the student population ethnically, although a substantial percentage of survey respondents (6.7%) placed themselves in the "Other" ethnic category. Response options for ethnicity were limited to six (as shown below, excluding non-response/unknown).

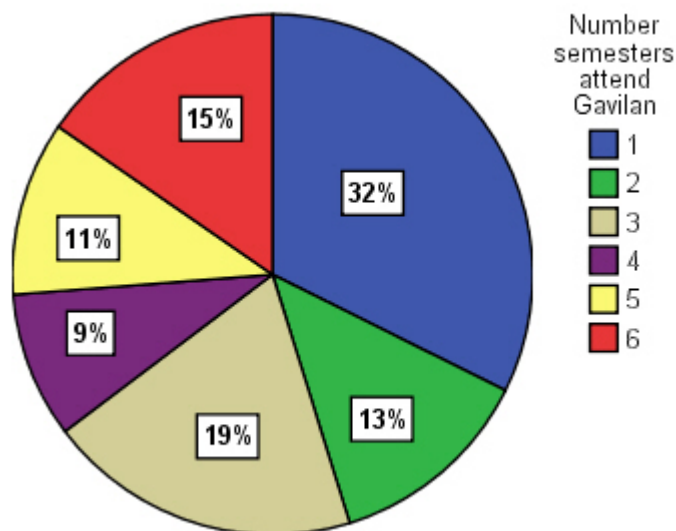
Ethnicity



The survey did not obtain a representative sample of students by age. Students aged 30 and above were underrepresented and students in the 18 to 20 age group were overrepresented. Several explanations for this sample characteristic are possible. Fewer students aged 30 and above were enrolled in the classes that elected to participate in the survey. Students aged 30 and above declined to participate in the survey in class. Classes that tend to enroll students from all age groups elected not to participate in the survey (approximately of the or were not randomly selected during the class sampling process. Students from the Fire and Protective Services courses were not surveyed; these courses tend to enroll more students from each age group. And lastly, self-report data on personal information such as age and ethnicity are occasionally unreliable.

Age			
Survey Participants	Percent	Total College Population	Percent
17 or younger	3.7%	17 or younger	1.9%
18-20	41.4%	18-20	26.9%
21-24	19.9%	21-24	17.2%
25-29	10.4%	25-29	12.4%
30-34	4.8%	30-34	7.5%
35-39	4.2%	35-39	6.8%
40-44	4.5%	40-44	5.8%
45-49	3.0%	45-49	5.1%
50-59	4.3%	50-59	6.0%
60+	0.3%	60+	10.4%
Non-Response	3.6%		

Approximately 32% of survey respondents indicated that Fall 2006 was their first semester at Gavilan; this percentage was very close to the campus-wide new student rate of 37%. Ninety-five respondents (10%) indicated they had attended another community college or educational institution last semester.



The rate of combined day and evening course enrollment was higher for survey respondents (39%) than in the total student population (23%). Day and Evening Only course enrollment rates for survey respondents were representative of the total student population.

Reasons for Enrollment

The Marketing Committee developed a list of 14 potential reasons for student enrollment. The items chosen included well-established reasons for enrollment in general and specific reasons reflecting new conditions at Gavilan, such as the 16-week calendar, the summer marketing effort, and options for obtaining a 4-year degree through Indiana University. Items were included to determine whether discussions with counselors at high school or at Gavilan College influenced enrollment decisions. Because students may have multiple reasons for enrolling at any give time, the questionnaire allowed respondents to indicate all reasons that may or may not have contributed to their decision to enroll in Fall 2006.

The distribution of response for the 14 survey items is presented below. Items have been grouped according to where the majority of responses fell on a 5-point scale. Agree/Disagree response options have been collapsed to illustrate the general trend in response across the 14 items.

Questionnaire Item	Agree	Disagree	No Opinion
Close to home or work	83.7%	12.4%	3.9%
Classes fit well with schedule	72.6%	19.9%	7.5%
Getting AA, AS, or Certificate	70.0%	20.6%	9.4%
Can take classes in Gilroy, Morgan Hill, or Hollister	61.6%	27.1%	11.4%
Big Time Education, Home Town Location	58.7%	24.2%	17.1%
Like the instructors at Gavilan	48.8%	27.7%	23.5%

Many students indicated they had enrolled for Fall 2006 classes for very basic and well-established reasons: proximity to home and work, class schedule fit with life schedule, the desire to continue working toward a degree or certificate, good instructors, and multiple campus options. More than 58% indicated agreement to enrolling based on the phrase **"Big Time Education, Home Town Location."** Although this was part of the community marketing effort, students were not asked whether they had heard or seen the slogan, merely if they agreed with the statement itself in relation to their fall enrollment decision. The relatively high percentage of agreement suggests that students believe this statement applies to Gavilan College and that this sentiment played a part in their decision.

The items students disagreed had an influence on their decision to enroll at Gavilan in Fall 2006 are presented in Table 2 below. After completing the survey, the marketing group felt that asking students whether they enrolled after hearing about Gavilan from radio or TV advertising was not an effective method for determining whether marketing efforts had an effect on enrollment behavior.

The recent change from 17- to 16-week school calendar, 4-year degree options, and conversations with counselors did not appear to contribute to enrollment decisions, although the relatively large percentage of "No Opinion" could be interpreted as lack of knowledge about some of these items. Anecdotal information had suggested that students were more likely to enroll if their friends were enrolled at Gavilan too. For more than 50% of survey respondents, this was not the case.

Table 2. Reasons Most Students Disagreed Influenced Enrollment Decision			
Questionnaire Items	Agree	Disagree	No Opinion
Heard about Gavilan College on Radio or TV	7.2%	72.8%	20.1%
Shorter semesters this term	13.0%	66.3%	20.8%
4-Year Degree program at Indiana University	7.8%	65.0%	27.2%
Gavilan representative visited my High School	10.9%	64.9%	24.3%
After conversation with HS teacher or counselor	15.3%	60.7%	24.0%
Friends attend Gavilan	24.8%	58.8%	16.4%
After conversation with Gavilan Counselor	27.4%	56.4%	16.2%
Semester started later this fall	19.0%	55.3%	25.7%

Attendance at Other Institutions. Item-by-item responses from students who attended another institution prior to Fall 2006 were compared with those who reported not having done so. Two items showed significant differences in a non-parametric examination: "Getting AA/AS/Certificate" ($p < .0005$) and "Big Time Education, Small Town Location" ($p < 055$). In general, students who attended a different institution last semester were less likely to...

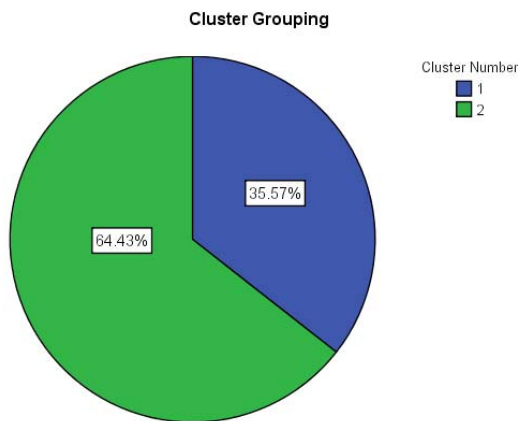
- have attended to complete or obtain their degree/certificate
- identify Gavilan with the sentiment "Big time..."
- attend because their friends did
- have been influenced by a high school visit from a Gavilan representative.

			Agree	Disagree	No Opinion
Attend a different CC or Institution last semester	Yes	Getting AA, AS, or Certificate	52.1%	35.1%	12.8%
	No		71.8%	17.8%	10.4%
	Yes	Big Time Education, Home Town Location	48.9%	30.9%	20.2%
	No		61.6%	21.7%	16.6%

Although no demographic factors distinguished "other attenders" and Gav-Only students, 70% of all students who attended another institution in Spring 2006 indicated that transferring to a 4-year institution was their educational goal. Attendance at other institutions and longevity of attendance at Gavilan are correlated. If a student attended another institution last semester he or she was more likely to be a first-time student at Gavilan, however over 50% of "other attenders" had attended Gavilan in the past or perhaps concurrently while attending another institution.

Number semesters attend Gavilan		1	2	3	4	5	6
Attend a different CC or Institution last semester	Yes	52.1%	20.2%	10.6%	4.3%	3.2%	9.6%
	No	30.0%	12.5%	20.6%	9.2%	12.3%	15.4%

A cluster analysis was employed to identify student groups based on response pattern (Table 3). Cluster 1 (35% of the sample) and Cluster 2 (64% of the sample) shared agreement on the first five items listed in Table 1. However, Cluster 1 tended to express "No Opinion" on the remaining items in Table 2, while Cluster 2 disagreed or strongly disagreed with these items. Clusters did not differ significantly on demographic characteristics.



There was no significant difference between how long a student has been at Gavilan, attendance at another institution, or educational goal and cluster group membership.

Although this survey does not provide definitive explanations for Gavilan's increase in Fall 2006 enrollment, the data suggest that students who wanted to earn transfer units, and perhaps were returning to Gavilan or concurrently enrolled elsewhere, may have contributed to enrollment increases.

Table 3. Opinion Clusters		
Questionnaire Item	Cluster 1	Cluster 2
Close to home or work	Agree	Agree
Classes fit well with schedule	Agree	Agree
Getting AA, AS, or Certificate	Agree	Agree
Can take classes in Gilroy, Morgan Hill, or Hollister	Agree	Agree
Big Time Education, Home Town Location	Agree	Agree
Like the instructors at Gavilan	Agree	Agree
Heard about Gavilan College on Radio or TV	No Opinion	Disagree
Shorter semesters this term	No Opinion	Disagree
4-Year Degree program at Indiana University	No Opinion	Disagree
Gavilan representative visited my High School	No Opinion	Disagree
After conversation with high school teacher or counselor	No Opinion	Disagree
Friends attend Gavilan	No Opinion	Disagree
After conversation with Gavilan Counselor	No Opinion	Disagree
Semester started later this fall	No Opinion	Disagree

