

WISCAPE – March 2008

A First Look at First-Gen:

Characteristics of First-Generation
Undergraduates at UW-Madison

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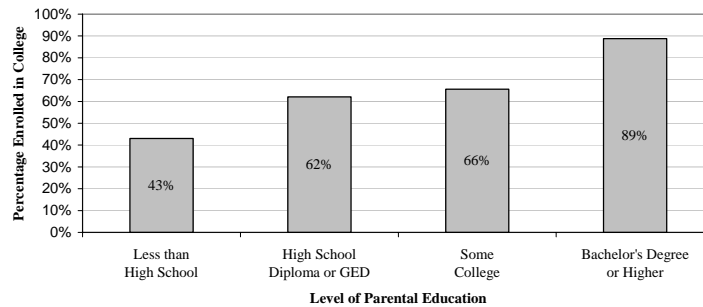
National and State Context



Transition to College

Your likelihood of going to college depends of the educational level of your parents

Enrollment in College Immediately After High School Graduation



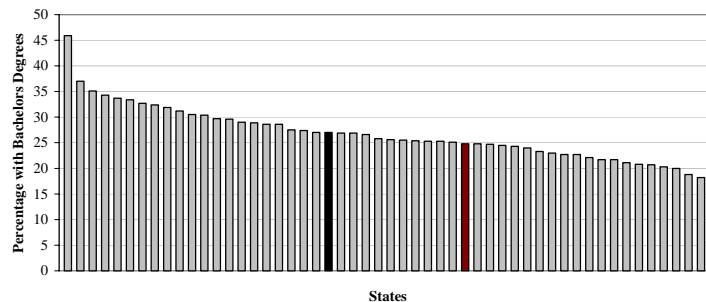
Source: National Center for Education Statistics, The Condition of Education 2007

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State Context

Wisconsin has a below-average proportion of adults with four-year college degrees

Percentage of Adults with Four-Year Degrees, by State



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006 American Community Survey

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National Studies

First-generation students are different in many ways from their peers whose parents have college degrees

Three large national studies:

- **Straight from the Source: What Works for First-Generation College Students**
The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education, December 2006
- **First-Generation Students in Postsecondary Education: A Look at their College Transcripts**
National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Education, 2005 (pub. 171)
- **Students whose Parents did not Go to College: Postsecondary Access, Persistence, and Attainment (Findings from the Condition of Education – 2001)**
National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 2001 (pub. 126)

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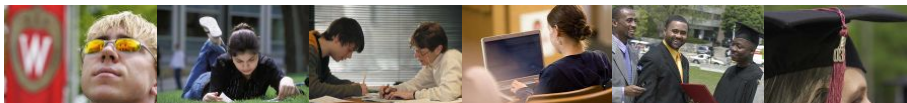
National Studies

First-generation students are different in many ways from their peers whose parents have college degrees

First-generation students are more likely to:	National Studies
Be academically under-prepared for college	✓
Start college at a two-year institution	✓
Be female	✓
Be older	✓
Be a student of color	✓
Be from a low-income family	✓
Work while enrolled in college	✓
Attend college part-time	✓
Delay in choosing a major	✓
Major in a non-technical field (i.e. not engineering)	✓
Drop and repeat courses	✓
Have lower GPAs	✓
Drop out or stop out	✓
Not graduate	✓

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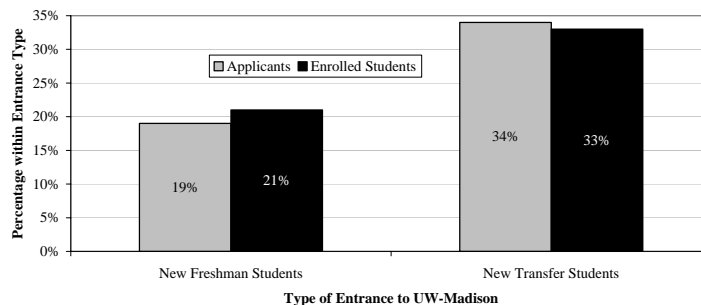
Demographic Characteristics



New UW-Madison Students

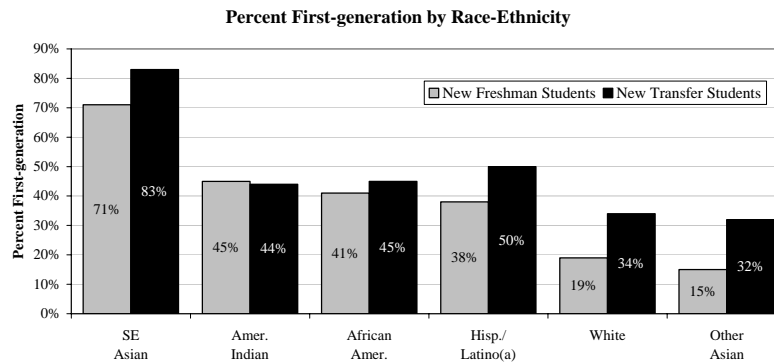
21% of First-Year Students and 33% of Transfer Students

New First-generation Students at UW-Madison



Race/Ethnicity

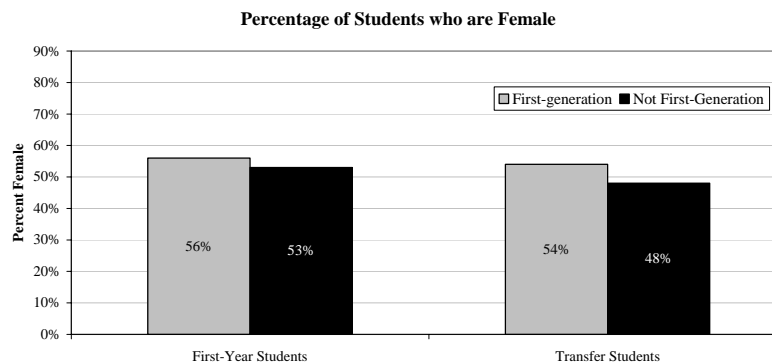
Asians are the most (and least) likely to be first-generation students



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Gender

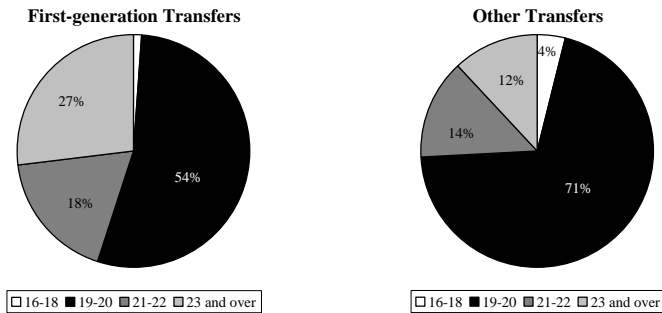
First-generation students are slightly more likely to be female



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Age

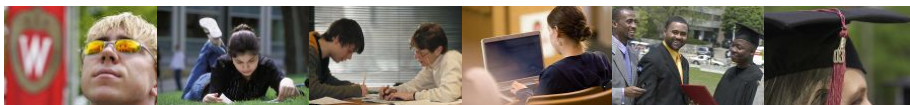
First-generation transfer students are older than other transfers



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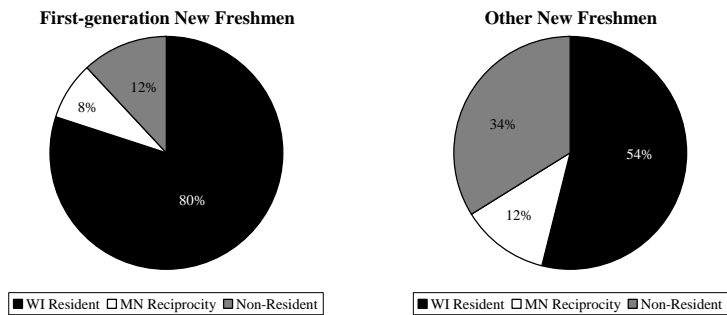
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Geographic Characteristics



State Residency

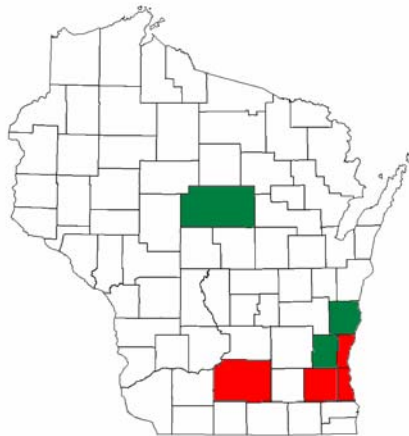
First-generation students are most likely from Wisconsin



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Wisconsin Geography

First-generation new freshmen come from all over Wisconsin



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Wisconsin Geography

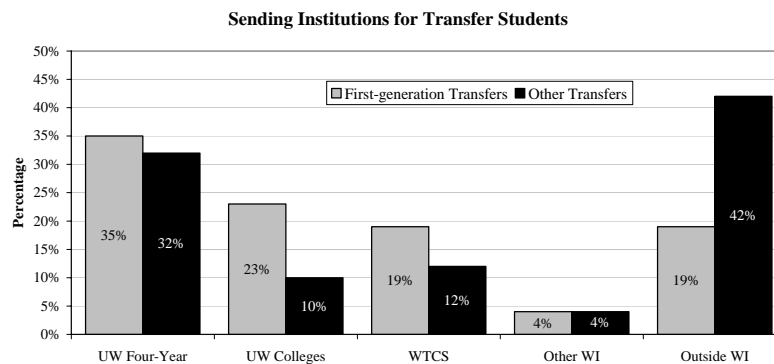
First-generation freshmen are more likely to come from rural Wisconsin



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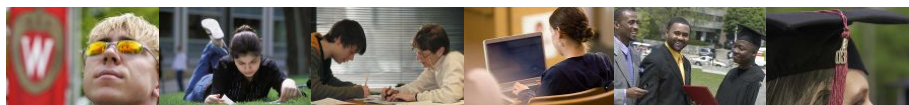
Sending Institutions

First-generation transfers are more likely coming from two-year institutions in Wisconsin



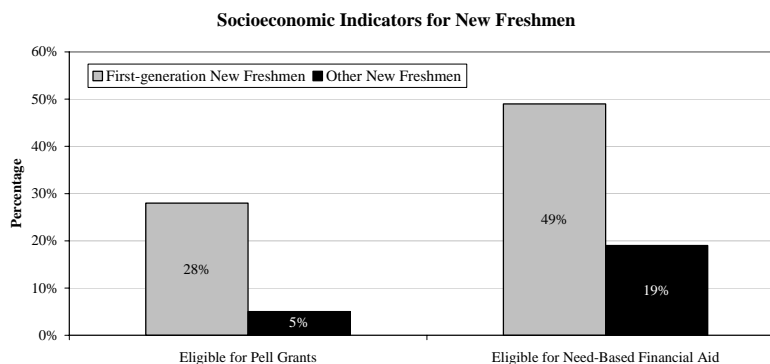
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Socioeconomic Characteristics



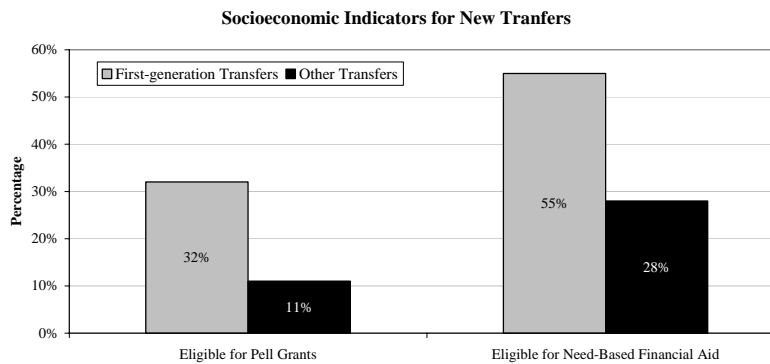
Socioeconomic Indicators

First-generation new freshmen are more likely to come from lower income families



Socioeconomic Indicators

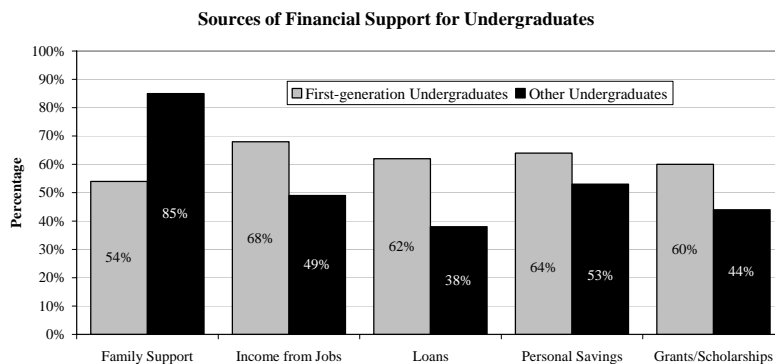
First-generation transfers are even more likely to come from lower income families



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Socioeconomic Indicators

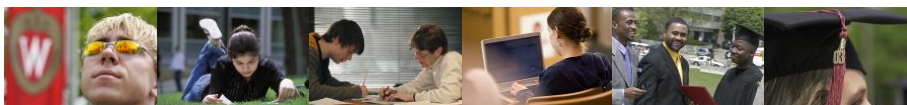
First-generation students rely less on their families for financial support and more on work, personal savings, and



Source: 2006 Undergraduate Survey, Analysis by Margaret Harrigan

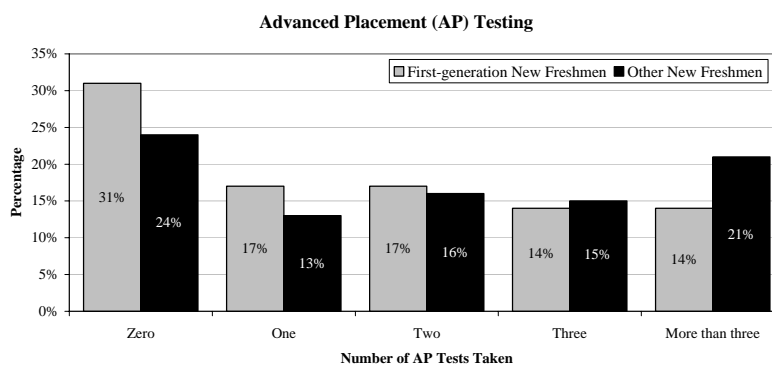
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Academic Preparation



Academic Preparation

First-generation new freshmen take fewer AP tests than other new freshmen



UW-Madison and National

First-generation students at UW-Madison are different in several ways from their peers

First-generation students are more likely to:	National Studies	UW-Madison
Be academically under-prepared for college	✓	
Start college at a two-year institution	✓	✓
Be female	✓	✓
Be older	✓	✓ (transfer starts)
Be a student of color	✓	✓
Be from a low-income family	✓	✓
Work while enrolled in college	✓	✓
Attend college part-time	✓	
Delay in choosing a major	✓	
Major in a non-technical major	✓	
Drop and repeat courses	✓	?
Have lower GPAs	✓	?
Drop out or stop out	✓	?
Not graduate	✓	?

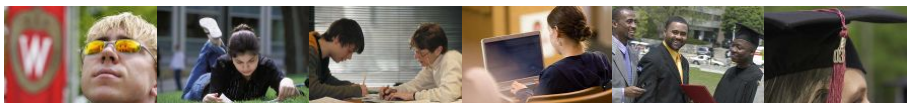
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Thank you!

Questions?
Feedback?

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apa.wisc.edu/degrees/First_Generation_Student_Attributes_2008.pdf

