



**Retention of Northern Arizona University's Fall 2002 Freshman Class:
Survey of the Non-Retained Freshmen**

**Office of Planning & Institutional Research
Northern Arizona University
Fall 2003**

<http://www4.nau.edu/pair/StatisticReport/SurveyReport.htm>

Retention of Northern Arizona University's Fall 2002 Freshman Class

Overview

During the summer of 2003, attempts were made to contact all freshman students that were in good standing but had not yet registered for the fall semester in order to assess whether or not these students anticipated returning to Northern Arizona University (425 students¹). Additionally, student and guardian respondents were asked what the one thing was that they would change about NAU. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide any additional comments.

Table 1. Fall 2002 Freshman Retention

	N	%
Total 2002 fall freshman class	2396	100%
Total students pre-registered for fall 2003	1581	66%
Total students not enrolled for fall 2003	821	34%
<i>Students in good standing, not enrolled</i>	(425)	(18%)
<i>Students not in good standing, not enrolled</i>	(396)	(17%)

Phone contact was made with 188 student respondents and 41 guardian contacts. Twenty percent of the respondents (n=46) indicated that they were planning on returning to NAU for the upcoming fall 2003 semester. Seventy-seven percent of respondents did not plan on returning to NAU, and 3% did not know / had not yet decided.

Table 2. Reported and Actual Enrollment for Fall 2003

	N by Report	%	N Officially Enrolled for Fall 2003
Does not plan to return to NAU	177	77%	1
Plan on returning to NAU for fall 2003 semester	46	20%	32
Did not know / had not yet decided whether or not to return to NAU	6	3%	3
Total	229	100%	36

Of the total 425 students in good standing, seventy-five students did return for the fall 2003 semester. Of the total 229 contacts that were made, 36 students returned for the fall 2003 semester. Only one student that reported that they were not planning on attending NAU in the fall eventually enrolled. Three of the six students that had not yet decided were enrolled, and 32 of the 46 students that reported that they were going to attend in the fall were enrolled. Incidentally, even though attempts were not made to contact students that were not in good academic standing, 41 of these 396 students (10%) did return for the fall 2003 semester.

¹ 425 is the total number of students that had not registered for the fall 2003 semester by June 12, 2003 and were in good standing (not on probation).

General Findings

- The majority of students that had not pre-registered for the fall 2003 semester but intended on returning to NAU indicated that they had not pre-registered because they were too busy at the time or had to meet with advisors before registering.
- Eighty-one percent of the students that did not plan on returning to NAU indicated that they were going to attend another university or college in the fall. 34% of these students were going to Arizona State University and 11% were going to the University of Arizona. Twenty-one percent were going to a community college.
- Guardian respondents were most likely to indicate dorms or housing as the one thing that they would change about NAU. The location (Flagstaff) was also cited as a negative by many guardian respondents.
- Student respondents were most likely to indicate that they would change nothing about NAU. NAU's location was also cited as a negative by many student respondents. The most common response for those students that intend on attending ASU or U of A in the fall was NAU's location.
- When respondents were given the option to provide any additional comments, 34% of the students provided an overall positive comment about NAU. Sixteen percent of students commented on the tuition costs or the general cost of living in Flagstaff.
- Guardian and student respondents that indicated their intention of attending a different university in the fall 2003 semester were generally positive about their experience at NAU. The small town, weather, distance from home, and general cost of living were common concerns of those leaving NAU.

Pre-Registration

Forty-six students indicated that they planned on returning to NAU in the fall, yet thirty-six of these students had not yet registered. When asked why they had not yet registered for their fall courses, 6% said they did not have enough time to register, 3% indicated that new Louie was too complicated, 8% responded that they could get the classes they wanted even if they registered late, 3% did not know what classes they needed to take, 11% were waiting for money or funding before registering, 6% did not know the time period or dates when to pre-register, and 25% were too lazy, tired, busy, etc., to register. 36% gave a response that did not fall into one of the above categories (refer to Appendix A).

Where are they going?

Of the 183 students that indicated they did *not* plan on attending NAU in the fall or had not yet made up their minds, 81% intended to attend another university or college in the fall, 15% did not plan on attending another university or college, and 4% did not know. Of the 149 students that indicated that they would be enrolling in another university or college in the fall, 34% were going to Arizona State University (ASU) and 11% were going to University of Arizona (U of A). Twenty-one percent planned on attending a community college and 30% of the students indicated another school (refer to Appendix B).

Table 3. Where the 2002 Freshman class went

	N of Respondents	% of Respondents
Another University or College	149	81%
Arizona State University	(50)	(34%)
University of Arizona	(17)	(11%)
Community College	(31)	(21%)
Another school	(45)	(30%)
Don't know	(6)	(3%)
Not attending another university or college	27	15%
Did not know	7	4%

The same 149 students were asked if they were planning on enrolling full or part-time. 94% of the respondents indicated that they anticipated enrolling full-time, 3% part-time, and 3% did not know or refused to answer.

Table 4 summarizes the hometown for those students that reportedly were attending ASU or U of A in the fall 2003. One out of state student plans on attending U of A and two out of state students plan on attending ASU. All other students were from Arizona.

Table 4. Hometown of ASU and U of A Transfers

Home town	Attending ASU	% of ASU	Attending U of A	% of U of A
Carefree	2	4%		
Cave Creek	2	4%		
Chandler	5	10%	1	6%
Duarte, CA	1	2%		
Flagstaff	3	6%	3	18%
Fountain Hills	1	2%		
Gilbert	1	2%		
Glendale	4	8%		
Marana	1	2%		
Mesa	5	10%		
Peoria	3	6%		
Phoenix	6	12%	3	18%
Scottsdale	6	12%		
Sedona			1	6%
Surprise	1	2%		
Tempe	4	8%		
Tuba City	1	2%		
Tucson	2	4%	5	29%
Valley City, ND	1	2%		
Yuma	1	2%		
Wilcox			1	6%
Anchorage, AK			1	6%
Lakeside			1	6%
Sahuarita			1	6%
Total N	50	100%	17	100%

The thirty-four students that did not intend to enroll in another university for the fall 2003 were asked if they were interested in returning to NAU at some point. 56% (19 students) said “yes,” 32% (11 students) said “no,” and 12% (4 students) did not know or refused to answer. The 19 students that did not want to return to NAU and the four students that were unsure were asked why they did not want to return to NAU. The following is the list of respondent’ answers:

- Wasn't mature enough for school
- Undecided
- There is not much for me at NAU.
- The weather
- Personal
- Not sure
- NAU experience was not too great. Felt like the previews deceived him into thinking NAU was something it was not.
- Just wanted to move
- Has 2 bachelor degrees already
- Going to a homeopathic specialty school in phoenix
- Going on church mission
- Frictional reasons
- Didn't know what she wanted to do
- Didn't have the programs she wanted
- Because I got my aestheticians license.

What is the one thing you would change about NAU?

All 229 respondents were asked what would be the one thing that they could change about NAU. All of the guardian responses are listed in Appendix C. Table 5 summarizes the 41 guardian responses.

Table 5: Guardian Responses as to what to change about NAU

Issue	Total # of Responses*	Total Percentage	ASU Guardian Responses	U of A Guardian Responses
Advising	3	7%		1
Tuition	3	7%		1
Academic	4	9%	1	1
Nothing	4	9%	1	
Location / Flagstaff	6	14%	4	
Other	6	14%	1	2
Dorm / Housing	8	19%	1	1
Don't Know	9	21%		
Total	43	100%	8	6

* N = 43 because some respondents provided more than one suggestion. Percentages for ASU and U of A guardians are not calculated due to the small N for these two samples.

All of the student responses are listed in Appendix D. Table 6 summarizes the 188 student responses as to what would be the one thing that they would change about NAU.

Table 6. Student responses as to what they would change about NAU

Issue	Total # of Responses*	Total Percentage	ASU Student Responses	# of U of A Student Responses
Teachers	2	1.1%		
Food	3	1.6%		
Refused	3	1.6%		
Registration Process	4	2.1%		
Class Scheduling	5	2.6%		

Issue	Total # of Responses*	Total Percentage	ASU Student Responses	# of U of A Student Responses
Academic Resources	6	3.2%	3	2
Advising	6	3.2%	1	
Community	6	3.2%	2	1
Activities	7	3.7%	1	
Course Specific	7	3.7%	3	1
Lack of Diversity	7	3.7%	2	
Tuition	8	4.2%		
Housing / Dorms	11	5.8%	3	
Weather	11	5.8%	3	1
Transportation / Parking	13	6.8%	1	
NAU's Location	20	10.5%	9	2
Other	20	10.5%	3	
Don't Know	23	12.1%	5	
Nothing	28	14.7%	7	2
Total	190	100.1%	43	9

* N = 190 because some respondents provided more than one suggestion. Percentages for ASU and U of A guardians are not calculated due to the small N for these two samples.

Additional Comments

All participating respondents (n=229) were given the option to provide any additional comments. The guardian comments are listed below. Guardian comments from students that will enroll at Arizona State University in the fall 2003 are marked by ASU. Guardian comments from students that will enroll at University of Arizona in the fall 2003 are marked by UofA.

- At NAU they do not have to answer to anyone. This may be the reason that they do not finish college. Also, there was a lot of trash around the outside of the dorm.
- Better communication
- Coordinate curriculum so students that transfer amongst the universities in the state are not at a disadvantage. (ASU)
- Cost of living is too high
- Father really likes the previews. Also likes the newsletter by e-mail for the parents. Had a positive experience at NAU.
- He is happy she is going there. It is a good school.
- Like the teachers, atmosphere of university is fine, but too small of a town, difficult to get a job, kept getting diarrhea from the food
- Might go back eventually.
- No, it was a good start for her, changed schools not because of NAU but for personal reasons
- No, the orientation program was great. (ASU)
- Organization skills poor (UofA)
- Overcast weather made him depressed support for people who need help (UofA)

- Parent preferred NAU. It was not what son needed. NAU did not have architecture program, not really sure about where son will go. (ASU)
- Problem in sorority and it was not revealed to the girls that it was required to live in the house.
- Scholarships should be held so that when students go on excursions they should send a letter to parents so they know the classes/dormitories are still available for them
- She came from a city. She would make a great CEO. She has a high IQ. We will see if she is happy at ASU. She may have to do something else. (ASU)
- She did not like the hours of the cafeteria.
- University did what parents expected and they have no complaints. (ASU)
- Wasn't the university she didn't like (UofA)

Table 7 provides a summary of additional comments that students made. The full list of comments is included in Appendix E.

Table 7. Additional Student Comments

Issue	Number of Responses	% of Responses	# of ASU Student Responses	# of U of A Student Responses
Overall Positive Comment about NAU	11	34.4%	2	2
Tuition / Cost of Living	5	15.6%	2	
Advising	3	9.4%	1	
Housing	3	9.4%	1	
Weather / Location	2	6.3%	1	
Registration	2	6.3%		1
Other	6	18.8%	3	
Total	32	100%	10	3

Appendix A: Why students were not registered for the fall 2003 semester

- Was going to other school but other plans fell through
- Was going on vacation; no time
- Too busy with work
- They said I had a hold because I needed to talk to my advisor before I signed up for my classes.
- The new system required me to go to faculty offices to enable me to sign up for classes. Also, new system was off-line
- Summer classes
- Summer classes
- I put these off until August or July.
- Hold on his account
- Have to talk to an advisor
- Had to take summer school classes - prerequisites
- Couldn't get to her academic advisor
- Advisor sending the pre-registration

Appendix B: Universities / Colleges previous NAU students plan to attend

Worcester University
Washington State
University Of Texas
University Of Texas - Pan-American
University Of New Mexico
University Of New Mexico
University Of Nevada
University Of Nebraska
University Of Idaho
University Of Colorado
Univ Texas At San Antonio
Univ Of Nevada In Reno
U Of Wisconsin
U Of Utah
U Of Alaska
Trade School
Stoneybrook In New York
South Mountain Community College, Phoenix
Slinders University In Australia, Still Enrolled At NAU
Scottsdale Community College
Scottsdale Community College
Scottsdale Community College
Scottsdale Community College
Rutgers University, Newbrunswick, New Jersey
Phoenix Community College
Paradise Valley Community College (PVCC)
Palamare Junior College
Orange Coast College First, Then Transfer To Cal State
Ohio State University
Ohio State
Northern Pioneer College
New Mexico Tech
New Mexico State
New Mexico

Mesa State At Grand Junction
Mesa Community College, Mesa, AZ
Mesa Community College, Mesa, AZ
Mesa Community College, Mesa, AZ
Mesa Community College, Mesa, AZ
Kansas University
Hunter College Through The NAU National Exchange
Highland University
Glendale Community College
Glendale Community College
Glendale Community College
Glendale Community College
Fullsail, Orlando, Florida
Front Rangwe Community College, Boulder, Co Florida -Atlantic
Estrella Mountain Community College
Estrella Community College, Avondale, AZ
Concordia University
Community College
Columbia College In Chicago
Colorado State Univ
Colorado State
College Of Eastern Utah
Chandler Gilbert Community College
Chandler Gilbert Community College
Chandler Gilbert Community College
CCSN Community College
California State University
Butler Univ.
Bryman's
Augburg's College In Minneapolis, MN
Arizona Western College
A Beauty School--No Specific One.

Appendix C: All Guardian responses as to the one thing they would change about NAU

Choice
Clean dorms
Did not like the dorms.
Didn't feel like he was challenged
Didn't like the people there
Dormitories
Explain why the classes were dropped
Father does not know anything. Son had no complaints
Flagstaff
Flagstaff doesn't have, tuition is too high out of state
Food was not like home cooking and that is like everywhere. The dorms were noisy, stupid, damaging item showers etc.
Freshman should monitors classes advisors should be aware of the students major course of study
Happy
Hard classes no advisor
Help freshman adjust to independence, coming directly from home where there are set rules. they do not have to answer to anyone
Improve the roommate situations wasn't comfortable
Info doesn't get to parents on time dorms weren't available
It was too far from home
Location

Match out the kids in the dorm a little better through personality
NAU should enhance their education curriculum to be at par with ASU and U of A curriculum.
No idea
No public transportation keep bus schedules on hand in a student packet
Not enough activities in flagstaff
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing advisors are hard to get a hold of
Only problem - the dorm was too small in McConnell.
Personal
Reduce tuition
Required courses not transferable
She does not know
She liked it just switching
She likes the Tempe downtown feel, more things to do.
She was happy.
Stepmother said that r said that it was an awful place to be, because of the small town. Other college kids love NAU.
The topic has never come up.
Tuition too high

Arizona State University: Guardian Responses

Food was not like home cooking and that is like everywhere. The dorms were noisy, stupid, damaging item showers etc.
It was too far from home
NAU should enhance their education curriculum to be at par with ASU and U of A curriculum.
Not enough activities in flagstaff

She liked it just switching
She likes the Tempe downtown feel, more things to do.
She was happy.
Stepmother said that r said that it was an awful place to be, because of the small town. Other college kids love NAU.

University of Arizona Guardian: Responses

Didn't feel like he was challenged
Freshman should monitors classes advisors should be aware of the students major course of study
Improve the roommate situations wasn't comfortable

No public transportation keep bus schedules on hand in a student packet
Personal
Tuition too high

Appendix D: All Student responses as to what they would change about NAU

Adding more bike racks.
Amount of places to eat on campus (type of food)
Athletic program--in football I would change everything.
Be able to take more credit hours as a freshman
Better academic advising
Better funding for things--e.g. enough funding to have photocopies for students, 6 student in lab, best to have 2.
Better res halls
Better tutoring
Better undergrad teachers
Bigger class sizes
Bigger place
Bigger variety of classes
Challenge level of the introductory courses.
Change its location to Tempe. It is a great school.
Change the dorm rooms - overcrowded
Cheaper
Closer to home
Closer to the equator
Co-ed dorm rooms not available
Communication building
Computers--no digital arts, computer animation.
Conflicting class schedules
Content of classes; more difficult
Cops
Cost
Didn't like the small town
Dorm bathrooms
English class for freshman incorporated computer learning but there wasn't any books to read from
English dept. Not so much of the old stuff
Expand the distance learning program
Faculty members
Flagstaff
Flagstaff people
Flexi should be transferable from semester to semester
Get campus more involved in community
Get rid of UC 101
Greek life should have their own houses
Have the university in Nogales, AZ--- or more classes in Nogales. Give other people opportunities for learning like...
Housing
I like the school and the teachers. I did not like the location, the environment, the cold, and a small town.
I liked it, I am from southern cal I need the beach
I love NAU. The location is bad and it is not Tucson
I wish they had a baseball team.
I would like my counselor/academic advisors to contact me, be more accessible, I did not know who they were.
I would not change anything, I did not have any problems with the school, I did not find a major there that I wanted.
I would offer more programs in various world cultures.
I would not have come
IITV course too much homework too much work
It's too cold
IITV in Ganado - nice to have another advisor
Lack of activities

Lack of control in the dorms, the dorms were out of control. That is the main reason that I left.
Less expensive cost of living
Less expensive for out-of-state
Let the students know what exactly it is. Did not meet up to standards.
Location
Location
Location 20 miles more diversity
Location--weather
Louie
Make going through the "bureaucracy" easier
Make parking easier
Make sure grass is greener
Minor and major classes
Mismanagement of money, shouldn't have parking people call the cops
More campus activities
More classes
More difficult classes
More diversity
More diversity in nationality of people.
More help in deciding major
More majors offered
More material for physics
More name brand food on campus-in dinning hall--like McDonalds, Dominos.
More parking
More parking areas
More people--more students, bigger city. I like a lot of people--a city atmosphere.
Mother said, I think that he had a pretty good experience--enjoyed classes and campus.
Need architecture program
Never felt like he was part of school; more activities for freshman to get involved and to know each other
No idea elevators in dorm facility
Not being so cold
Not so many departments. If something goes wrong in the file, takes forever to correct it
Nothing really wrong with it
Nothing to do flagstaff
Nothing, it was pretty great the way it was.
Off campus diversity
Out of state tuition
Parking
Parking situation. Lack of parking.
Parking-actually I think they are changing it now-not enough parking.
Parking--an on campus parking pass so that when you buy the pass you can be in any parking lot on campus.
Parking--lack of parking, and therefore having to pay fees. It was difficult to find parking.
Policy on classes that is missed by students a grade not dropped from higher grade
Put it in a bigger town
Really likes NAU

Refused
Register even if you owe money
Registration online takes too long
Residential life discrimination by the management
Roommates didn't help
Rules of the dorms and security
Scheduling for classes
Scholarship findings & loans
School mascot
She is a transfer student and it was a hassle
She liked it here
Shuttle bus for off-campus
Summer classes Yuma area weekend classes in town
Take out uc101--do not have it anymore
That they would have my major. They don't have organ major there.
The cost
The distance from McConnel and north campus
The dorms - nicer dorms
The food
The help for the students - counselor wise
The location is not good. Does not like the small town and likes the city. Wants to do more things.
The parking permit, you should be able to get one for the whole

campus
The smell --the roads smell
The town environment, make it more college oriented.
The variety of classes
The weather
The weather
The weather
There is nothing about NAU that I would change
Too far away from home
Too far from family
Too many liberals --instructors are too liberal in the way they instruct.
Too small
Too small of a school
Transportation system - need more buses
Tuition
Tuition is high, lower the cost.
UC 101 - I do not like the class altogether.
Upgrade overall education
Warmer weather
Weather
Weather
Weather
Wouldn't want to change anything

Arizona State University: Student Responses

Athletic program--in football I would change everything.
Bigger class sizes
Bigger variety of classes
Change its location to Tempe. It is a great school.
Closer to home
Co-ed dorm rooms not available
Communication building
Content of classes; more difficult
Cops
Didn't like the small town
Don't know
English class for freshman incorporated computer learning but there wasn't any books to read from
Faculty members
Flagstaff people
Housing
I don't know
I like the school and the teachers. I did not like the location, the environment, the cold, and a small town.
Location
Location--weather
More campus activities
More difficult classes

More diversity
More help in deciding major
No comment
No idea
Not sure
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing, it was pretty great the way it was.
Off campus diversity
Put it in a bigger town
Rules of the dorms and security
She liked it here
The location is not good. Does not like the small town and likes the city. Wants to do more things.
The smell --the roads smell
The weather
Too small of a school
Transportation system - need more buses
Wouldn't want to change anything

University of Arizona: Student Responses

Get rid of UC 101
I love NAU. The location is bad and it is not Tucson
More majors offered
Nothing
Nothing

That they would have my major. They don't have organ major there.
The town environment, make it more college oriented.
Too far from family
Warmer weather

Appendix E. All additional student comments

Advisor did not help me out. Put me in calligraphy, when had nothing to do with what I had asked for--computer basics in animation. There was a class at NAU that I would have liked to take in animation--flash.
Asking for financial support for the NAU men's volleyball club team & better gym time.
Cost of living, issues with advisor
Didn't feel that the school cared about her as a person; had major problems with housing
Didn't like the cold weather
Dorms were loud and hard to study in
Enjoyed my stay, but the cost was too much
Great school, like classroom sizes, like that teachers care. Fun to be there.
Had bad advisor; would like to see better advisor
I like NAU.
I like NAU.
I like the band, Coldplay.
I thought this school was awesome. Afterhours could be cooler.
Liked the school just not the environment
Lived in Seachrist - bike racks are in back, not in front. That is bad - got in trouble for placing bike in front of Seachrist. Should be allowed.
Make online pre-registration easier management

Making class registration less complicated
Meal plan was more than expected
More stuff to do for people who don't drink
NAU has a pretty campus, and like it
NAU is a great school
No, it wasn't NAU she wasn't happy with, not ready to leave home, she enjoyed the time she was there and enjoyed NAU
Nothing about NAU, the price of living in Flagstaff is insane.
Parking sucks
Prescott classes need a/c not enough teachers less tuition for students need more resources need student id available to main campus
Really liked NAU- good school
School is great teachers are great
She is a grad student that took undergrad classes. Professors wasting time returning papers instead of having students pick them up, the professors cannot post grades of any kind. Privacy policy interferes.
There are education classes in Nogales. Have the other kinds of classes like nursing, criminal justice, business, administration. the ones that are running the program are very nice, supportive & encouraging
Union hall should have easy access. Laundry should take 25 cents and the id card
Vacuums for dorms

Arizona State University: Additional Student Comments

Asking for financial support for the NAU men's volleyball club team & better gym time.
Cost of living, issues with advisor
Dorms were loud and hard to study in
Great school, like classroom sizes, like that teachers care. Fun to be there.

Liked the school just not the environment
Lived in Seachrist - bike racks are in back, not in front. That is bad - got in trouble for placing bike in front of Seachrist. Should be allowed.
Meal plan was more than expected
More stuff to do for people who don't drink

University of Arizona: Additional Student Comments

I like NAU.
I thought this school was awesome. Afterhours could be cooler.
Making class registration less complicated