

# FALL 2015 SURVEY OF STUDENTS WHO LEFT THE INSTITUTION



**O**ffice of **I**nstitutional **E**ffectiveness

Jacqueline Honda, Director

Umi Jensen, Research Analyst

# Fall 2015 Leavers Survey

---

## Executive Summary

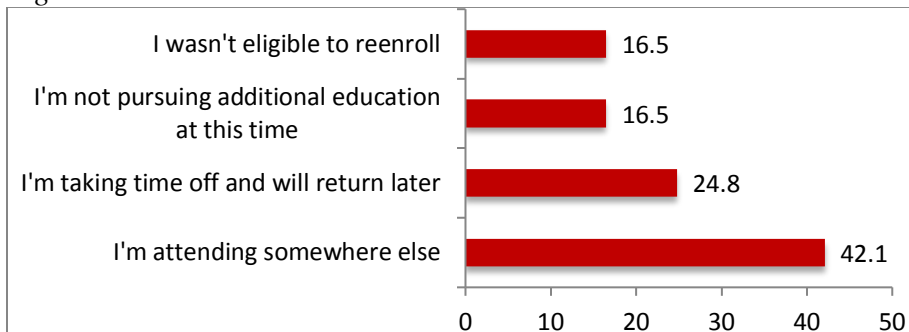
The Office of Institutional Effectiveness surveys students each year who do not re-enroll the following school year at University of Hawai'i West O`ahu (UHWO). In Fall 2015, the Leavers Survey was sent to 1,306 students who did not return to UHWO after either the Spring 2014 or Spring 2015 semester. There was a response rate of 9.4 percent (123 respondents). Understanding why students choose to leave UHWO is very important given a retention rate of 60 percent for this fall. Findings of this survey include the following:

- 42.1 percent of respondents are attending elsewhere, mainly within the UH system. Top reasons for enrolling in another institution were lack of majors, class availability, class scheduling (i.e. time of day, semester offered), and class format.
- 24.8 percent of respondents are taking time off and 16.5 percent are not pursuing education at this time. Top reasons for stopping out of UHWO were financial reasons, family reasons and responsibilities, and personal health. Class availability and class scheduling were also important in their decision to take time off.
- 16.5 percent were unable to enroll mostly due to academic disqualification and financial reasons.
- 21.5 percent of students surveyed reported financial difficulty was a contributing factor in leaving UHWO. This financial difficulty was mainly due to worsening financial situations, not qualifying for financial aid, or not finding work. Half of these students did not apply for financial aid due to disqualification because of academics, not wanting to take on debt, missing the deadline, or using military scholarship.
- Students are most satisfied with quality of instruction and location of UHWO and least satisfied with majors offered, course scheduling, and course format.

## Why Students Have Not Enrolled for Fall 2015

Over 40 percent of respondents are attending another institution and about a quarter of students are taking time off and will return later (see Figure 1). About 17 percent of respondents weren't eligible to enroll due to academic probation or suspension while another 17 percent are not pursuing additional education at this time. Some respondents commented on why they left. Major themes were personal reasons such as health or work, financial reasons, academic hold or probation and lack of classes. Three respondents did not enroll because they plan to graduate.

Figure 1. Reasons Students Did Not Enroll at UHWO

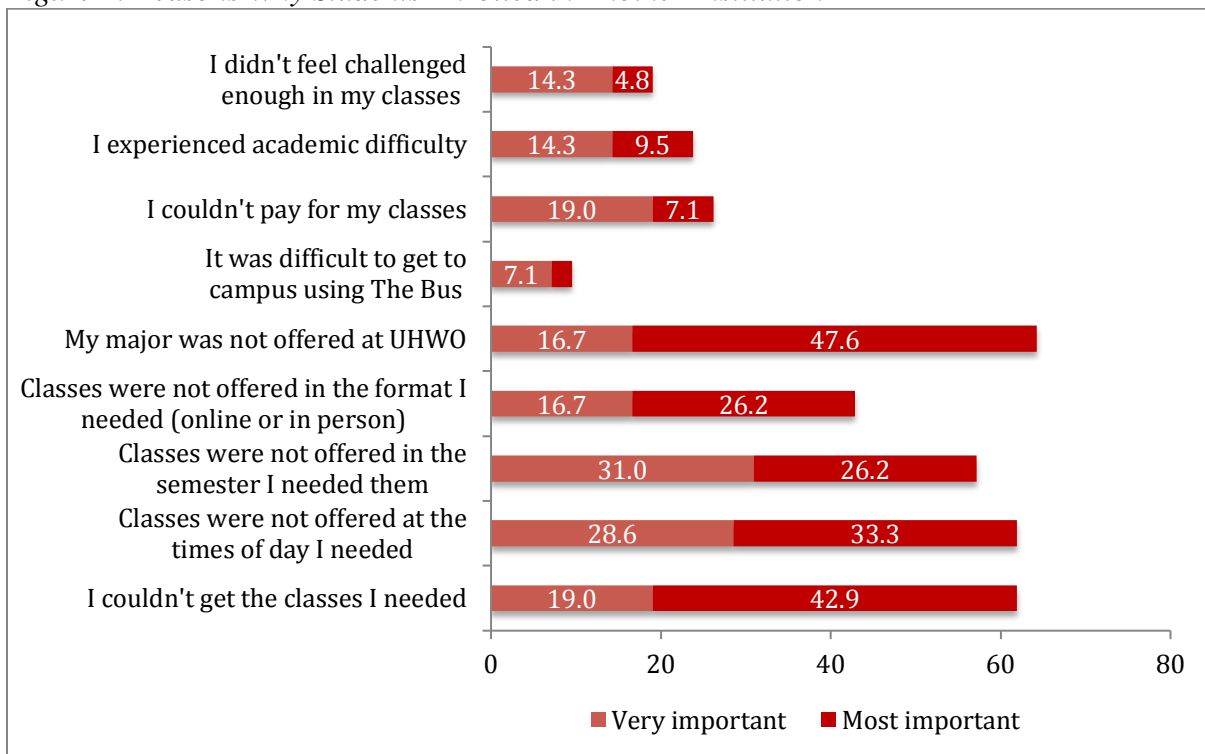


### Students Attending Elsewhere

Of the 42.1 percent of respondents reporting they are attending somewhere else, 39 students shared where they are attending and why. Over 75 percent of these respondents said they were attending another institution in the UH system. In open ended comments about their choices, half the students did not return because either their major or necessary classes were not offered at UHWO or was not offered at the timing convenient to the student. Other students commented that it was more affordable elsewhere or that there were more scholarships at UH Mānoa.

These students also identified important reasons for leaving UHWO. Almost half of students (47.6 percent) said their most important reason for leaving was that UHWO did not offer the major they wanted (see Figure 2). Over 40 percent said not getting the classes they needed was their most important reason for leaving. A third of students said they could not get classes at the time of day they needed, while a quarter of students (26.2 percent) could not get classes in the semester they needed or in the format they needed. Almost 10 percent of students left due to academic difficulty while 7 percent reported not being able to pay for classes was most important in their decision to leave. In a later question, 21.4 percent said financial difficulty contributed to their leaving. Difficulty with public transportation to campus and not feeling challenged in classes were not major reasons for enrolling elsewhere.

Figure 2. Reasons Why Students Enrolled in Another Institution

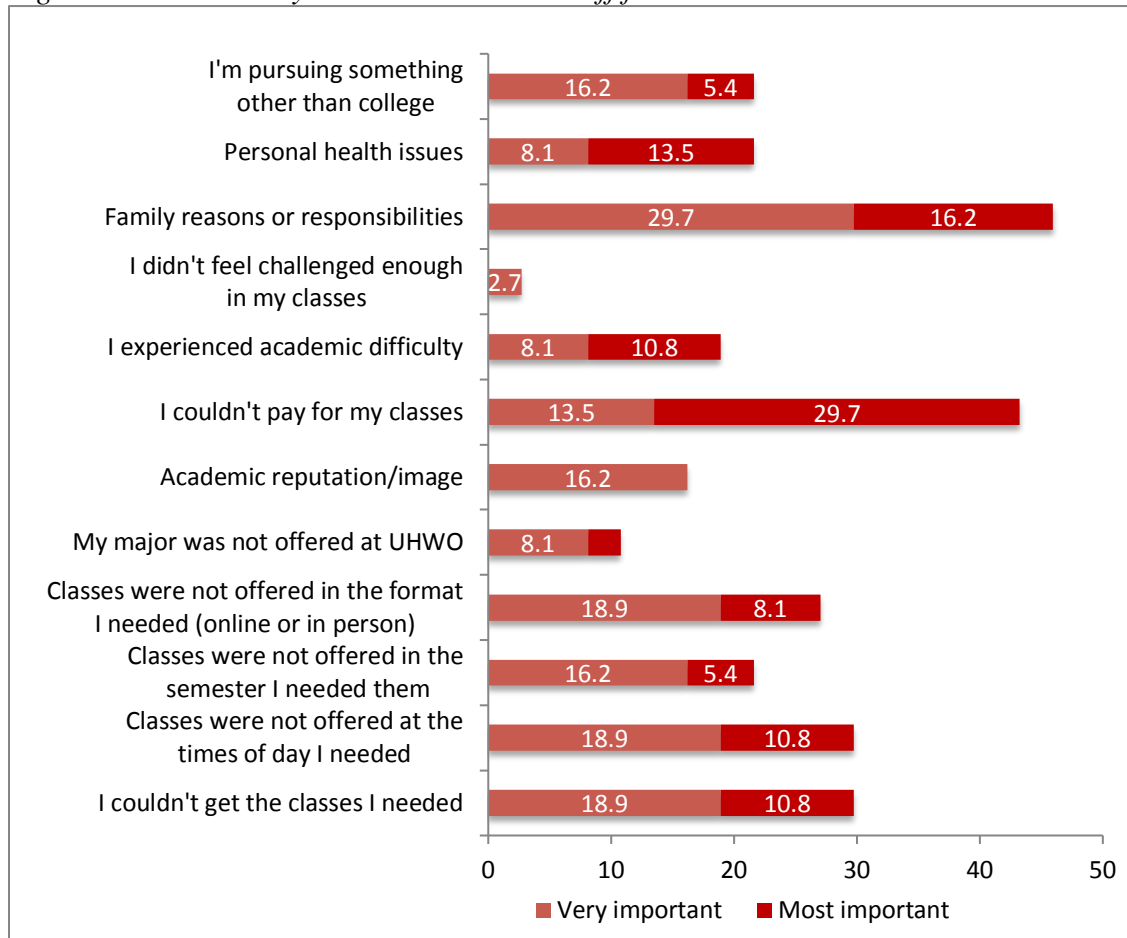


### Students Taking Time Off

A quarter of students (24.8 percent) said they were taking time off from school and they shared the reasons why they have chosen to do so. Almost 30 percent (29.7 percent) of students said that not being able to pay for classes was the most important reason for taking time off from school. In a separate question, 50 percent said that financial difficulty was a contributing factor to take time off from college. About 16 percent of students said family

reasons or responsibilities was the most important reason to take time off from school with another 30 percent of students reporting family reasons was a very important reason in their decision. Another 13.5 percent said personal health issues was most important. Classes being offered at the time of day, semester, and format needed were very important reasons for taking time off for 19 percent of students.

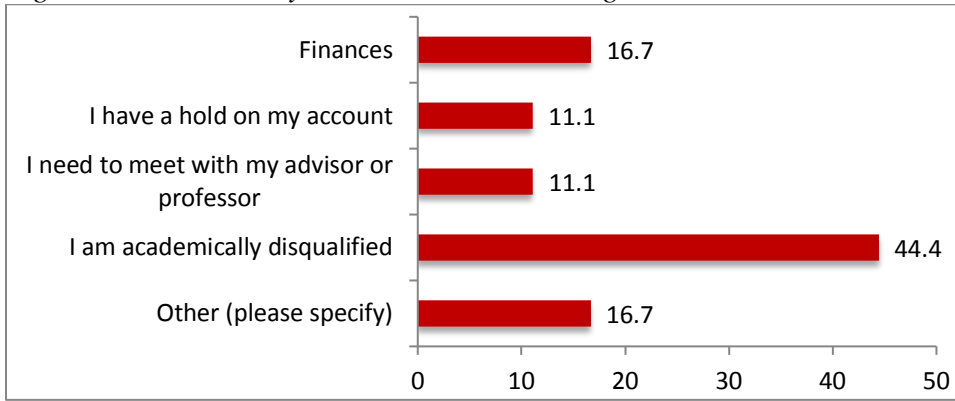
*Figure 3. Reasons Why Students Took Time Off from School*



### **Students Who Could Not Register**

About 16 percent of students who responded could not register for classes. This was mainly due to academic disqualification/suspension (44.4 percent) or finances (16.7 percent). Other students had to take a test before enrollment, moved, or had to work fulltime (See Figure 4).

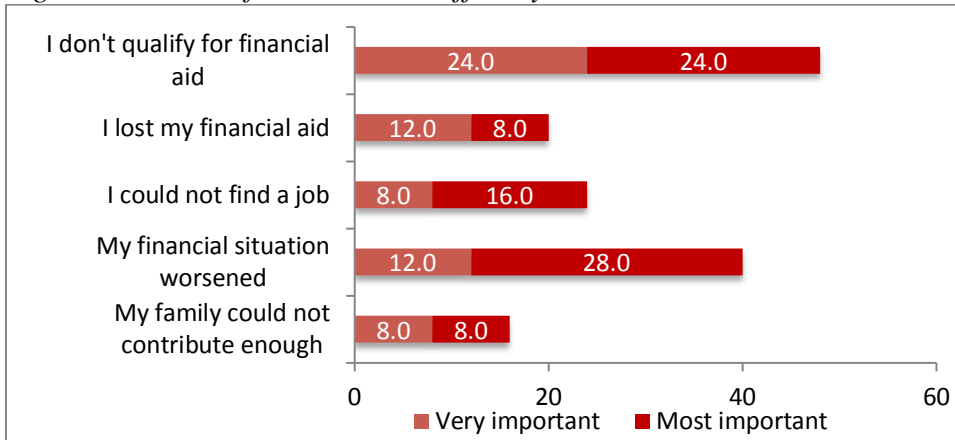
Figure 4. Reasons Why Students Could Not Register



### Students Who Reported Financial Difficulty

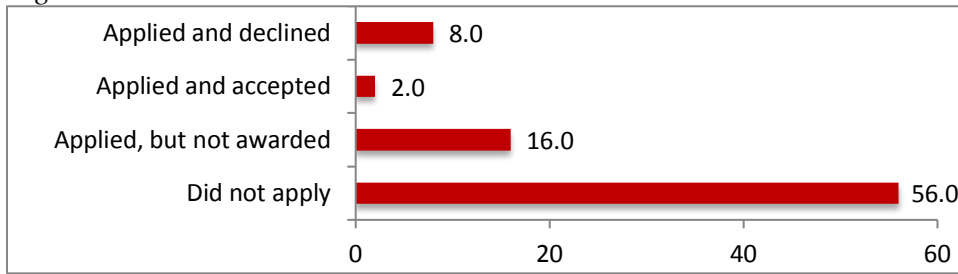
Of all respondents to the survey, 21.5 percent reported that financial difficulty was a contributing factor to not enrolling at UHWO this fall. Of this 21.5 percent, the most important reasons for their financial difficulty were that their financial situation worsened (28.0 percent) or they did not qualify for financial aid (24.0 percent). Not qualifying for financial aid was very important to another 24 percent who reported financial difficulty. Not finding a job was the most important reason for financial difficulty for 16 percent.

Figure 5. Reasons for Financial Difficulty



The same students were asked about their financial aid status. Over half did not apply for aid while 16 percent applied but were not awarded. Another 8 percent declined financial aid although awarded while 2 percent of students with financial difficulty did receive financial aid. Students who did not apply said they did not qualify financially or academically or that they did not need aid. One student had difficulty with the application for FAFSA and another did not want to take on loans for their education.

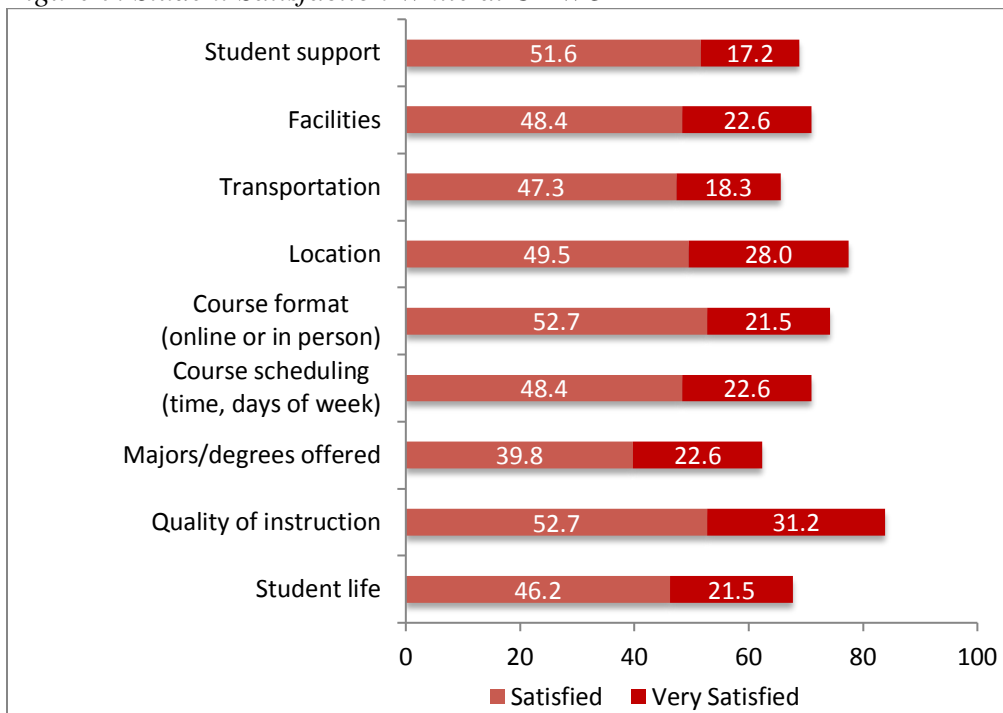
Figure 6. Financial Aid Status



### Student Satisfaction at UHWO

All respondents were asked about their satisfaction while at UHWO. Students reported the most satisfaction with quality of instruction and location with respectively 83.9 percent and 77.5 percent of students that were satisfied or very satisfied (see Figure 7). Students were least satisfied with majors and degrees offered with 62.4 percent satisfaction. Course scheduling and format also had relatively lower satisfaction. Student life, student support, location, and transportation were not applicable to 12 to 21 percent of the students, most likely because they were online students.

Figure 7. Student Satisfaction While at UHWO



Finally, students could leave final comments about their experience at UHWO. A major theme of the comments was about offering more programs or classes at UHWO. Some are satisfied overall, others with the quality of instruction from specific faculty, and a few students expressed they can't wait to return to UHWO. Others had bad experiences with advising or faculty. Another student experienced a lack of support for distance learning students and another had difficulty transferring credits from a foreign university so decided to attend somewhere else. One student expressed having academic difficulty because he or she was not adequately prepared at a community college and so suggested to increase the rigor across the UH system to prepare students who will transfer to UHWO later.