

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION SURVEY 2018 WITH TRENDS 2014-2018

INTRODUCTION

The New Student Orientation Survey was administered to first-time students during on-campus orientations during the summer preceding their first fall semester, in conjunction with the Dean of Students' orientation satisfaction survey. New students were asked (1) where Farmingdale ranked among the colleges they applied to, (2) which factors influenced their decision to attend Farmingdale, and (3) if they plan to participate in various activities and offerings at Farmingdale, ranging from being involved in student government to graduating on time. 1141 new incoming students completed the survey in 2018.

KEY FINDINGS

2018 Survey

- Farmingdale was the first choice for more than one-half (53%) of respondents, an increase of two (2) percentage points over the prior year.
- Cost and proximity to home continued to be cited by most new students as being very influential in their decision to attend Farmingdale, followed by courses or programs offered. This year, financial aid offered was cited more frequently than academic reputation and appearance of the campus, which had previously rounded out the five factors most frequently identified as very influential.
- Almost all respondents expressed optimism about graduating on time, with 97% indicating that it is very likely (88%) or somewhat likely (9%) that they will do so. However, 31% indicated that it is very likely that they will transfer to another institution before graduating, and an additional 25% indicated that it is somewhat likely.
- More than 80% of new students indicated that it is at least somewhat likely that they will use student services offered on campus, such as the tutoring center, career counseling, financial aid advising, and academic advising. About half of respondents indicated they are very likely to use these services.
- Despite the fact that most new students plan to be employed at least part-time while in college, many indicated it is very likely that they will join a student club (44%) and/or develop close friendships with other students (66%).
- Close to one-third (30%) of respondents indicated it is very likely that they will study abroad while at Farmingdale, while another 24% indicated that they are somewhat likely to study abroad.
- Most respondents (84%) indicated that they are at least somewhat likely to do an internship; more than half (52%) indicated it is very likely.

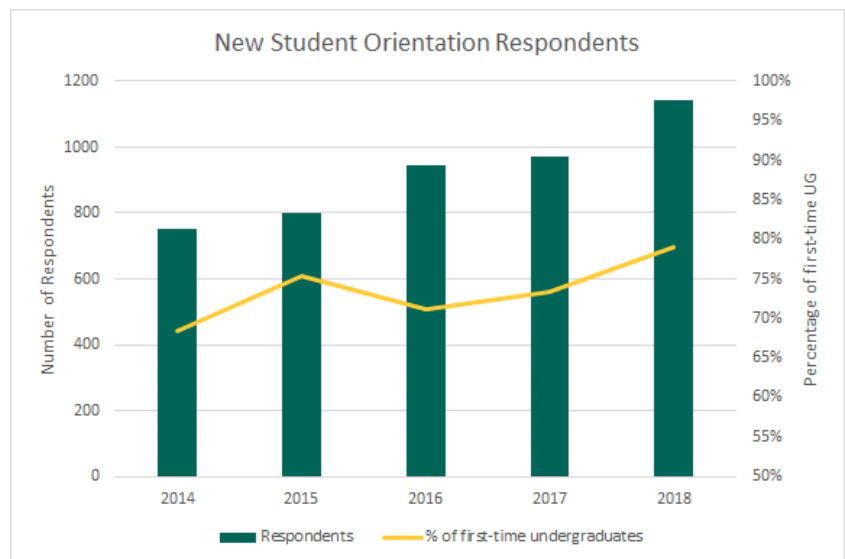
2014-2018 Trends

- The number of respondents has increased over the past five years, as has the percentage of first-time undergraduates represented. The 1141 respondents in 2018 comprise 81% of (pre-census) first-time undergraduates, up from 753 respondents (68% of first-time undergraduates) in 2014.

- Although the percentage of respondents for whom Farmingdale was their first choice was up slightly in 2018 (53% vs. 50% in 2017), the five-year trend shows a decrease. 2017 was the low point over the 2014-2018 time period; the high point was 2014, when Farmingdale was the first choice for 59% of respondents.
- Incoming students' decisions are driven primarily by pragmatic factors, with social and other factors ranking much lower in importance. Cost, proximity to home, courses or programs offered, and academic reputation have consistently been among the factors most identified as very influential in influencing respondents' decision to attend Farmingdale. In 2018, as in 2014, financial aid offered was among the five factors most identified as very influential; in the intervening years, appearance of the campus was more frequently identified as very influential.
- Incoming students are very committed to their educational and career goals and less focused on student activities. Students are confident that they will complete a degree and graduate on time. Most also plan to work at least part-time while in college and develop close friendships with peers. Less than one-third of students plan to participate in student government, athletics, or study abroad.

RESPONDENTS

The number of first-time undergraduate students who complete the survey has increased over the past five years. Most students who attend an on-campus orientation complete the survey, and the percentage of new first-year students who complete the survey has increased from 68% in 2014 to a projected 79% (based on registrations as of the first day of classes) in 2018.



RANKING

2018 Survey

Table 1: Among the colleges that you applied to, where does Farmingdale rank? (2018)

| Answer Options | Response Percent | Response Count |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| First choice | 53% | 600 |
| Second choice | 31% | 356 |
| Third choice | 10% | 116 |
| Less than third choice | 6% | 69 |
| Total | 100% | 1141 |

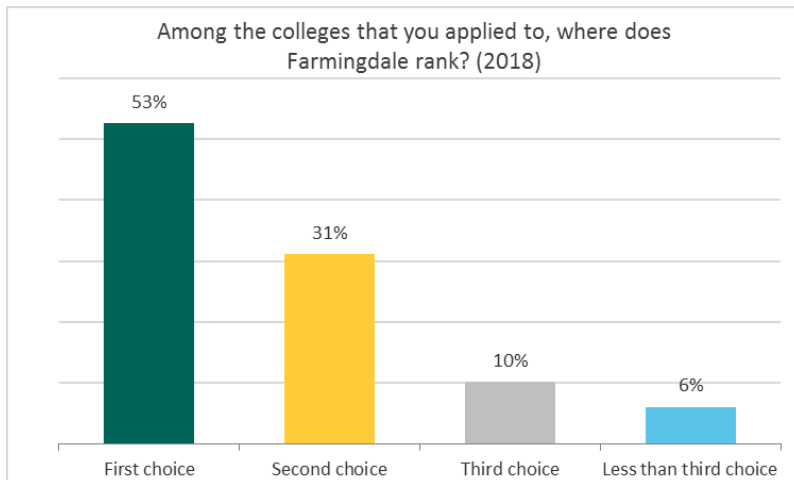


Figure 1: Farmingdale rank (2018)

2014-2018 Trends

Over the past five years, the percentage of respondents for whom Farmingdale State College was their first choice has decreased from 59% to 53%. We have seen a corresponding increase in the percentage of students indicating that Farmingdale was their second or third choice.

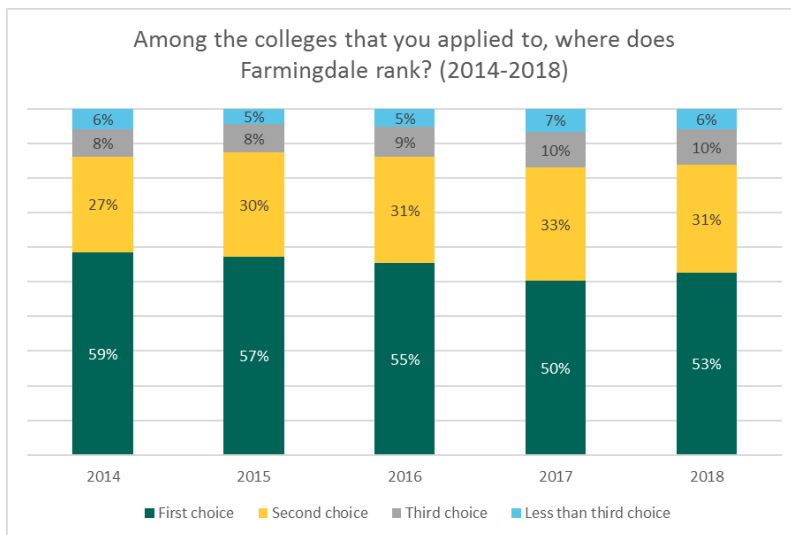


Figure 2: Farmingdale rank (2014-2018)

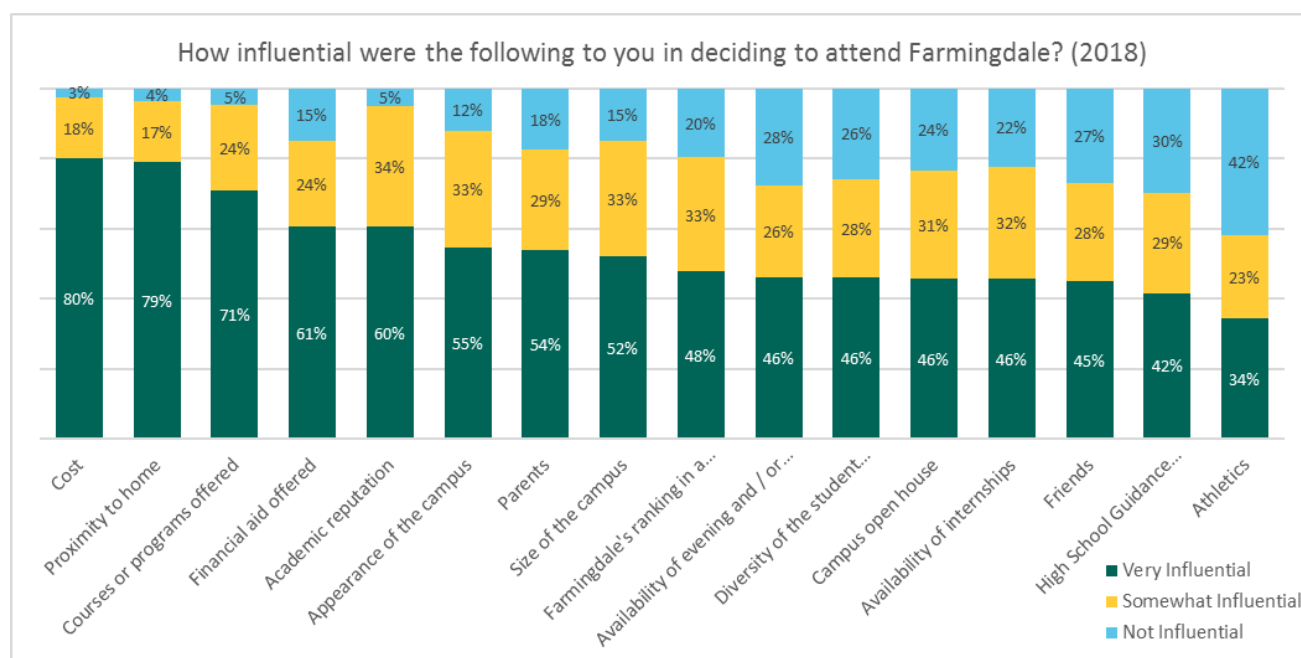
FACTORS INFLUENCING DECISION

2018 Survey

Although there was little change from the previous year in the factors that emerged as the "top five" drivers of students' decisions to attend Farmingdale, there were some notable changes in the percentages of students rating certain factors as very influential. Given that financial aid offered moved into the top five, it's not surprising that it was rated as very influential for 61% of 2018 respondents, compared to 55% of 2017 respondents. The percentage of students rating courses or programs offered as very influential rose from 66% to 71%. 2017 saw a dip in the influence of rankings, but this factor has rebounded in 2018. We also saw a modest increase in the percentage of students rating academic reputation as very influential (from 57.5% to 60.5%).

Table 2: How influential were the following to you in deciding to attend Farmingdale? (2018)

| Factor | Very Influential | Somewhat Influential | Not Influential |
|--|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Cost | 80% | 18% | 3% |
| Proximity to home | 79% | 17% | 4% |
| Courses or programs offered | 71% | 24% | 5% |
| Financial aid offered | 61% | 24% | 15% |
| Academic reputation | 60% | 34% | 5% |
| Appearance of the campus | 55% | 33% | 12% |
| Parents | 54% | 29% | 18% |
| Size of the campus | 52% | 33% | 15% |
| Farmingdale's ranking in a college profiles publication or website | 48% | 33% | 20% |
| Availability of evening and / or weekend classes | 46% | 26% | 28% |
| Diversity of the student population | 46% | 28% | 26% |
| Campus open house | 46% | 31% | 24% |
| Availability of internships | 46% | 32% | 22% |
| Friends | 45% | 28% | 27% |
| High School Guidance Counselor | 42% | 29% | 30% |
| Athletics | 34% | 23% | 42% |

**Figure 3: Factors influencing decision to attend Farmingdale (2018)**

2014-2018 Trends

Respondents were asked to indicate how influential each of sixteen (16) factors were in their decision to attend Farmingdale State College. The factors most frequently rated as “very influential” have remained remarkably consistent over the past five years, with the same “top three”—cost, proximity to home, and courses or programs offered—each year and only slight variation in the presence/position of financial aid, campus appearance, and academic reputation in the “top five.”

Despite the consistency in the top five” very influential factors, the percentage of respondents rating certain factors as very influential has fluctuated over the past five years. From 2014 to 2018, the percentages of students rating athletics, cost, diversity, and friends as very influential factors in their decision have decreased. There have been modest increases in the percentages of students rating financial aid and courses or programs

offered as very influential drivers. Taken as a whole, these results indicate that incoming students' decisions are driven primarily by pragmatic factors (cost, location, courses/programs, and financial aid), with social and other factors ranking much lower in importance.

Table 3: "Very Influential" Factors in Decision to Attend Farmingdale State College (2014-2018)

| Factor | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | Trend |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Cost | 84% | 83% | 83% | 81% | 80% | |
| Proximity to home | 82% | 80% | 82% | 78% | 79% | |
| Courses or programs offered | 69% | 68% | 71% | 66% | 71% | |
| Financial aid offered | 56% | 54% | 58% | 55% | 61% | |
| Academic reputation | 59% | 60% | 64% | 58% | 60% | |
| Appearance of the campus | 55% | 55% | 60% | 56% | 55% | |
| Parents | 56% | 54% | 55% | 52% | 54% | |
| Size of the campus | 55% | 54% | 56% | 53% | 52% | |
| Farmingdale's ranking in a college profiles publication or website | 48% | 46% | 49% | 43% | 48% | |
| Availability of evening and / or weekend classes | 49% | 46% | 50% | 45% | 46% | |
| Diversity of the student population | 50% | 44% | 48% | 45% | 46% | |
| Campus open house | 47% | 45% | 52% | 45% | 46% | |
| Availability of internships | 46% | 43% | 48% | 44% | 46% | |
| Friends | 50% | 46% | 48% | 44% | 45% | |
| High School Guidance Counselor | 42% | 42% | 45% | 40% | 42% | |
| Athletics | 40% | 37% | 42% | 35% | 34% | |

PLANS AND PARTICIPATION AT FARMINGDALE STATE COLLEGE

2018 Survey

As in previous years, 2018 respondents plan to graduate on time and work while attending school. In keeping with the aforementioned increase in the influence of financial aid on students' selection of Farmingdale State College, the percentage of respondents indicating they are somewhat or very likely to seek help from a Financial Aid advisor increased from 78% in 2017 to 83% in 2018.

Table 4: How likely is it that you will do the following during the time you attend Farmingdale? (2018)

| Plans/Participation | Very likely | Somewhat likely | Not Likely | Not Sure |
|--|-------------|-----------------|------------|----------|
| Graduate on time | 88% | 10% | 2% | 1% |
| Work part-time while in college | 72% | 21% | 4% | 3% |
| Earn a bachelors degree | 67% | 21% | 6% | 5% |
| Develop close friendships with other students | 66% | 26% | 4% | 3% |
| Earn an associates degree | 65% | 16% | 11% | 7% |
| Seek academic help at the college's tutoring centers | 55% | 33% | 4% | 8% |
| Seek career counseling | 53% | 34% | 7% | 6% |
| Do an internship | 52% | 32% | 7% | 9% |
| Seek help from a Financial Aid advisor | 50% | 33% | 11% | 7% |
| Seek Academic advising on a regular basis | 46% | 39% | 10% | 5% |
| Join a student club | 44% | 35% | 11% | 10% |
| Transfer to another college before graduating | 31% | 25% | 30% | 13% |
| Change my major | 31% | 21% | 15% | 33% |
| Study abroad for a semester | 30% | 24% | 31% | 15% |
| Participate in athletics | 28% | 24% | 33% | 14% |
| Work full-time while in college | 24% | 22% | 40% | 14% |
| Be involved in student government | 22% | 21% | 41% | 16% |

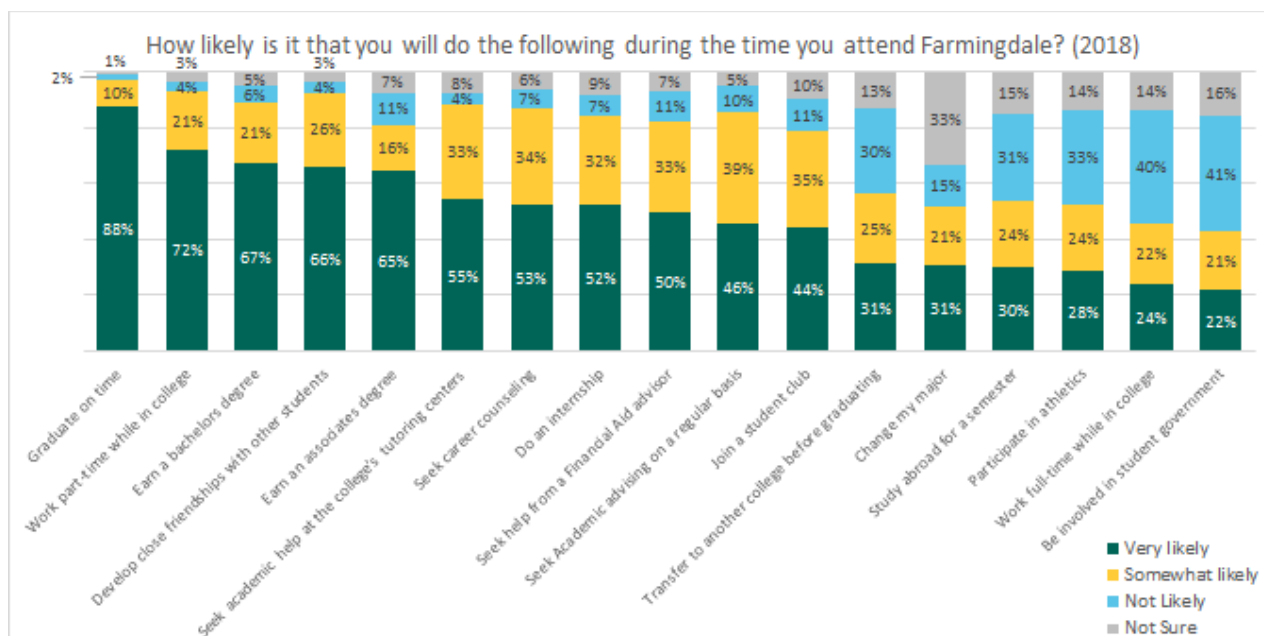


Figure 4: Plans and participation at Farmingdale (2018)

2014-2018 Trends

Incoming students are confident that they will complete a degree and graduate on time. Most also plan to work at least part-time while in college and develop close friendships with peers. Given their intentions to balance school, work, and social life, it's unsurprising that tutoring, internships, and career counseling also rank high on the list of things students are very likely to participate in at Farmingdale.

Student government, athletics, and study abroad rank near the bottom of the list, with less than one-third of students indicating they're very likely to participate in these activities. Similarly, only about a third of students indicated that it's very likely they'll change their major or transfer to another institution. Overall, responses to this question indicate that incoming students are committed to their educational and career goals and less focused on student activities.

Table 5: "Very Likely" Activities and Accomplishments at Farmingdale State College (2014-2018)

| Plans/Participation | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | Trend |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Graduate on time | 86% | 83% | 87% | 84% | 88% | |
| Work at a job part-time while attending college | 74% | 75% | 76% | 67% | 72% | |
| Earn a bachelor's degree | 65% | 69% | 69% | 68% | 67% | |
| Develop close friendships with other students | 69% | 65% | 68% | 63% | 66% | |
| Earn an associate's degree | 65% | 67% | 68% | 64% | 65% | |
| Seek academic help at the college's tutoring centers | 56% | 55% | 53% | 51% | 55% | |
| Seek career counseling | 50% | 49% | 53% | 47% | 53% | |
| Do an internship | 51% | 45% | 53% | 47% | 52% | |
| Seek help from a Financial Aid advisor | 48% | 45% | 49% | 45% | 50% | |
| Seek Academic advising on a regular basis | 47% | 49% | 48% | 43% | 46% | |
| Join a student club | 49% | 47% | 49% | 44% | 44% | |
| Transfer to another college before graduating | 40% | 34% | 38% | 29% | 31% | |
| Change my major | 31% | 27% | 29% | 28% | 31% | |
| Study abroad for a semester | 33% | 29% | 31% | 30% | 30% | |
| Participate in athletics | 38% | 32% | 32% | 29% | 28% | |
| Work at a job full-time while attending college | 29% | 25% | 25% | 21% | 24% | |
| Be involved in student government | 24% | 24% | 25% | 20% | 22% | |