

Vital Signs

A Wheaton College Factbook - Norton, Massachusetts - January 2000

Welcome to the online version of Vital Signs, a Wheaton College factbook. This document is a summary of the 1999-2000 edition published by the Office of Institutional Research and includes a dashboard, survey reference, and summary pages for each section. Although this is a condensed version it does provide the reader with snapshots of Wheaton College. We hope you find it to be a valuable information resource.

This document is in Adobe Acrobat's portable document format (PDF) which provides an on-screen table of contents. If you are using Acrobat 4, look in the menu bar and choose:

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Survey Reference

The following reference is provided to assist in answering surveys within various offices. The list includes the most recent data available, as well as recommendations for where to turn for any questions or for further information.

	Recent Data	For the period:	Page	Source
Enrollment				
Full-time (FTE)	1,480	Fall 99	7	Registrar
Part-time (headcount)	20			
FTE Students	1,490			
Charges				
Tuition and Fees	\$ 22,950	Fiscal Year	35	Finance Office
Room and Board	6,730	99-00		
Comprehensive Fee	29,880			
Annual Fund, Gifts and Grants				
Annual Fund	\$ 2,610,345	Fiscal Year	17	College
Total Gifts and Grants	7,609,720	98-99		Advancement
Revenues and Expenses				
Operating Revenues	\$ 42,663,007	Fiscal Year	33	Finance Office
Operating Expenses and Losses	40,844,581	98-99		
Library				
Total Volumes	371,535	Academic Year	46	Library
Total Circulation	45,744	98-99		
Faculty				
Full-time (headcount)	96	Academic Year	20	Provost's Office
Part-time (headcount)	44	99-00		
FTE positions	106.3			
FTE actual	109.9			
Student/Faculty Ratio (FTE)	13.4 : 1			
Staff				
Total (headcount)	327	September	23	Human Resources
Total FTE	295.8	1999		
Endowment Market Value				
Market Value of Endowment and Life Income Funds	\$ 118,282,519	6/30/99	36	Finance Office
Total Net Assets	126,322,245			
	161,163,936			

Introduction

<http://www.wheatoncollege.edu/IT&S/IR/>

Welcome to the 10th edition of Vital Signs. This issue continues the Vital Signs tradition of presenting a historical overview of the college's activity in a variety of departments and functions. The presentation of these snapshots may illuminate trends, help the reader to make connections among these trends, and raise questions that can lead to a greater understanding of the college. Although no publication could present a complete picture of the institution, we offer Vital Signs as a means of gaining a broader perspective on Wheaton College. We hope you find it to be a valuable information resource and a useful tool for planning and decision making.

There are a number of changes and additions to this edition of Vital Signs. At the request of the trustees we have included a Dashboard. All of the financial information has been consolidated in a Finance section. The maps in the Advancement and Student Body sections have been replaced with graphs, and the Faculty and Staff sections have been separated. We have severely limited the press run of the print version, hoping that most on-campus readers will use the excellent online version.

We hope over the coming year to continue to receive your feedback and ideas on ways to make Vital Signs the most useful publication it can be, both online and off.

As always, we express our appreciation to those of you who provide the information found on these pages and who assist in the production of the book.

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Vital Signs is an internal document distributed within the Wheaton community for information and planning purposes. For additional information regarding the definitions behind the data, advice on the appropriate usage of the data, or before releasing any of this information outside the community, please consult us.

Wheaton College

Dashboard

Fall 99

KEY: Performance quantity being measured
 largest value for past 5 years 22% current value, ●
 20% t direction of change s t , ●
 lowest value for past 5 years 2% and better or worse than last year
 and no change from last year

Student Body

Full-Time Enrollment	
1,480	1,480 S
1,300	fall semester

Fresh-Soph Retention	
85%	85% S
82%	

6-yr Graduation Rate	
73%	
67%	Cohort entering Fall 93 67% ●

Men	
37.0%	34.0% S
31.0%	

Diversity	
15.9%	
13.7%	13.7% t

International	
5.0%	

States/Countries	
33/28	32/23
29/19	

Study Away	
21.6%	21.6% S
12.7%	% of jr class in spring semester

Admission

Applicant pool	
2,463	2,463 S
1,830	

Selectivity	
75%	
71%	71% t

Yield	
31%	
24%	24% t

Top 10% of HS Class	
24%	24% ●
18%	

Average SAT	
1200	1200 S
1060	

Student Aid

Discount Rate	
29.3%	
26.6%	26.6% t

All receiving Wheaton grant	
63%	63% ●
58%	

Finance

Endowment Support Ratio	
2.9	2.9 ●
2.5	Endowment/ Operating Expense

Assets to Expenses Ratio	
1.35	1.35 S
1.01	Expendable Net Assets/ Operating Expense

Debt Ratio	
60%	Debt/ Expendable Net Assets
37%	37% t

Dependence on Op Rev	
79%	Operating Revenue/ E & G Expenditures
76%	77% S

Endowment Market Value	
126	126 S
67	million \$

Endowment Total Return	
21%	
6%	6% t

Spending Rate	
5.8%	
5.2%	5.2% t

Donor-Supported Aid	
18%	S
% of Wheaton grant aid	

Faculty

Student/Faculty	
13.4	13.4 S
12.6	

Full-time	
88%	87% S
84%	

Classes > 50 students	
18	
13	16 S Fall semester

Advancement

Total Gifts & Grants	
9.1M	7.6M t
6.8M	

Alumnae/i participation	
41%	Annual Fund
38%	38% t

Physical Plant

Reinvestment rate	
1.8%	1.8% ●
1.5%	

Condition Index	
4.8%	4.7% t
4.3%	

Applicant Pool: 2,463 ▲

The size of the applicant pool is the key to our ability to improve the quality and diversity of the students we admit and to control the discount rate. Our applicant pool has grown steadily for the past five years, gaining 35% since 1995. The increase may be attributed to both enhanced marketing efforts on the part of the college and to more successful penetration of historic market segments. For comparison: the average applicant pool of colleges in the Northeast 9 comparison group was 3,303 in Fall'98.

To gain a longer term perspective, we note that the applicant pool for the last all-women's class in fall 1987 was 799 students.

Selectivity: 71% ▼

Selectivity is a measure of how much control we have over the quality and other attributes of the incoming class. As we become more selective we accept a smaller and smaller fraction of the total applicant pool. We have been able to improve selectivity over the past five years. In 1995 the selectivity was 75% and in 1999 it was 71%.

Looking at selectivity among the NE9 colleges shows two clusters. Wheaton, Muhlenberg and Hobart/William Smith cluster around 70%, while others cluster between 34% and 44%. Average selectivity for the group was 50% in Fall '98.

Student Quality

Student quality is difficult to measure, so we use more than one statistic to get a sense of it. The fraction of the entering class who are in the top 10% of their high school classes (now almost 25%), the average SAT scores, and the percentage of students who enroll as named scholars with merit awards indicate an upward trend in quality over the past five years. This corresponds to the increase in the applicant pool and our resultant ability to be more selective.

Yield: 24% ▼

Yield measures the number of students who choose to enroll, as a fraction of all those we accept for admission. It tells us how much they want us, unlike selectivity which measures how much we want them. Increasing our yield, like increasing the applicant pool, allows us to be more selective. Yield has varied from 24% to 31% over the past five years, with no clear trend.

Yield among the NE9 colleges varies from 24% to 35%, with a mean of 30%.

ADMISSION

Full-Time Enrollment: 1,480 ▲

Fall Opening Day Enrollment has increased 13.9% since 1995.

Fresh-Soph Retention: 85% ▲

Freshmen-Soph retention represents freshmen entering in the Fall of 98 and returning Fall 99 as sophomores. The Fresh-Soph Retention Rate has averaged 83% for the past 15 years.

6-yr Graduation Rate: 67% ●

The Graduation rate has remained consistent since 1995. Graduation rate among the Northeast 9 colleges varies widely. While the average of the group is 76% there are actually two clusters of schools: one group are below 70% and the other is between 80% and 83%.

Men on Campus: 34.0% ▲

The number of men enrolled has grown 25% since 1995. There is a continuous goal to increase the male percentage as part of total enrollment, making Wheaton more similar in its coeducational profile to the NE9.

Diversity: 13.7% ▼

Diversity counts the members of the student body who identify themselves as Asian, Black, Hispanic, American Indian or multiracial.

International Students: 5.0%

Over the past five years the number of non-citizens has declined as we have focused on American citizens, (with families living and working abroad) who are eligible for government student aid programs. Wheaton continues to recruit students from around the world, as the number of countries represented in the student body (23) demonstrates.

Juniors Study Away: 21.6% ▲

Juniors studying away has begun an upswing over the past few years. This is due, in part, to a variety of new Wheaton sponsored programs including PRESHCO.

STUDENT BODY

Total Gifts: \$7.6M ▼

The campaign for Wheaton is in its final year and has surpassed the original target of \$65M. While cash gifts are down from last year new pledges from trustees, alumnae/i, parents, friends and foundations exceeded \$16M. Reaching the \$18M goal for enhancing the arts and \$3M for the Annual Fund remain important objectives before June 30, 2000.

Alumnae/i participation: 38% ▼

Alumnae/i participation slipped again in FY99 despite aggressive steps to improve. Among alumnae/i of classes before 1970 only one class had less than 42% participation. For the alumnae/i classes of 1970 to 1999 only one achieved 42% participation.

ADVANCEMENT

Student/Faculty ratio: 13.4 : 1 ▲

The student/faculty ratio has increased slightly over the past few years as enrollment has grown. Our goal is to reduce the ratio to 12:1.

Full-time: 87% ▲

The % of Full-time faculty increased from 84% last year to 87% this year. The median is 85% for the last 5 years. This is due, in part, to an increase in enrollment. Our goal is to increase the percentage of Full-time faculty to at least 90%.

Classes > 50 students: 16 ▲

There are 3 more large classes than last year bringing the total to 16 or 5%. The fraction of small classes (under 20 students) improved to 68%. Our goal is to reduce the number of classes > 50 students to 3%.

FACULTY

Discount Rate: 26.6% ▼

The discount rate measures the fraction of gross student revenues that is returned to students as institutional aid. After a troubling period when the discount rate climbed from less than 20% to almost 30% , we have seen a leveling off and gentle decline in the past three years. This corresponds to the period of greatest improvement in selectivity and also to a time of change in our strategies for awarding of student aid, including the beginning of merit awards.

Students receiving Wheaton Grants: 63% ●

The fraction of the student body receiving Wheaton aid grants shows a particular increase in academic year 96-97, due to the implementation of merit awards in that year. At the same time the average Wheaton grant declined from 43% to 35% of the cost of education. Overall the initiation of merit awards, including the combination of these two changes, resulted in strengthened yield and a reduced discount rate. Since that year the Wheaton grant as a fraction of the cost of education has continued to decline and the discount rate has declined further.

Endowment Support Ratio: 2.9 ●

The endowment support ratio is an indicator of the college's financial strength. It measures the size of the endowment relative to one year's operating expenses.

Assets to Expense Ratio: 1.35 ▲

This ratio measures unrestricted resources available against one year's total operating costs.

Debt Ratio: 37% ▼

This ratio measures the college's ability to meet outstanding debt from unrestricted expendable net assets.

Dependence on Op Rev: 77% ▲

This ratio measures dependency on operating revenue (principally net tuition & fee) to meet Educational & General expenses.

Endowment Market Value: \$126M ▲

Market value of endowment (including life income and annuity funds) is \$126 million as of June 30, 1999. Recent growth in endowment has been dramatic (an increase of \$45 million over the past three years) and is the result of investment performance, strong and generous support of the Campaign for Wheaton and steady decline in endowment spending.

Endowment Total Return: 6% ▼

Total return on endowment as of June 30, 1999 was 6%. Over the past 3 years the average annual total return exceeded 15%.

Spending Rate: 5.2% ▼

The endowment spending rate has decreased in accordance with the Strategic Plan from 6.0 percent in FY94 to 5.2 percent in FY99. The equilibrium spending rate of 5.0 percent is planned in FY00 and beyond.

Donor Supported Aid: 18% ▲

Donor Supported Aid is the fraction of total Wheaton grant aid that is provided by gifts and endowments restricted to student aid. There is not a graph but last year was 16%.

FINANCE

Plant Reinvestment Rate: 1.8% ●

The Board of Trustees recognized the importance of reinvesting a fraction of the replacement value of the physical plant in facilities replacement and renewal. They also established a five-year plan for increasing this reinvestment to 1.8% per year. The college achieved this target slightly ahead of schedule in 1998 and plans to continue reinvestment at the same rate in the future.

Facilities Condition Index: 4.7% ▼

This index expresses the facilities maintenance backlog as a fraction of the total replacement value of the physical plant. We have allowed the backlog to rise slightly (to 4.8%) while ramping up the plant reinvestment rate. Now that plant reinvestment has leveled off at 1.8% the facilities condition index is expected to remain stable or improve slightly.

PHYSICAL PLANT

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