This Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG) Snapshot by the Beginnings subgroup reports findings on first-year students’ responses to communication preferences. The data included represent results from the Beginning Student Survey (BSS), an annual survey administered by the CAWG Beginnings subgroup. First-year students complete the paper survey approximately 8-10 weeks into fall semester during courses such as ENGL 101 and UNIV 100.

Demographics

Respondent demographics: For the BSS 2015, out of 3,936 first-time full-time students, 1,449 (37%) completed the survey. Demographic percentages are displayed below in red alongside a comparison to the demographic breakdown of all UMD first-years. Students in all race/ethnicity categories except “foreign” are U.S. citizens. Demographic data were pulled from UMD databases, which align with mandated federal reporting guidelines. These guidelines set the race/ethnicity groups and binary sex classifications included here. The data in this report represent only the responses of survey respondents, not all UMD freshmen; therefore, use caution when generalizing. Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Note: Fewer than 5% of first-year students or BSS respondents reported being these race/ethnicities:

- American Indian or Alaska Native: U.S.
- Asian: U.S.
- Black or African American: U.S.
- Hispanic: U.S.
- Two or More: U.S.
- Female
- Male
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: U.S.
- Unknown: U.S.
- White: U.S.

All 2015 UMD First-Year Students

BSS 2015 Respondents

Communication Preferences

For communications from UMD offices SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED TO YOU, what is your TOP preference for contact?

- Email: 87%
- Text message: 9%
- Mobile app: 1%
- Phone call: 1%
- Postal mail: 1%
- Other: <1%

N=1433
Have you used any of the following options to obtain official UMD campus-wide information?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Yes: I get information this way.</th>
<th>No: I haven’t but I know it exists.</th>
<th>I don’t know what this is.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UMD Website</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMD safety alerts via email</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMD This Week (email digest of events)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMD safety alerts via text</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TerpLife app</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calendar.umd.edu (online UMD calendar)</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oneUMD Website</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=1427-1433, depending on item

- Respondents tend to receive emergency alerts via email (77%) more than via texts (30%).
- More than half of respondents (56%) are aware that they can get safety alerts via text but do not receive them that way.
- Nearly one-third of respondents do not know what UMD This Week (31%), the TerpLife app (30%), or calendar.umd.edu (31%) are and nearly two-thirds do not know about oneUMD (61%).

Select your TOP social media preference to receive campus-wide information.

- Facebook 46%
- Twitter 29%
- None 10%
- Instagram 7%
- Snapchat 6%
- Other 2%
- YouTube 1%
- Vine* <1%
- LinkedIn <1%
- Pinterest <1%

*Note: Vine was discontinued since students took this survey.

Questions to consider
- Why do students prefer to receive emergency alerts via email (77%) rather than via text (30%)?
- How might the purpose of the content (social vs. official university business) impact students’ social media preferences?