

Executive Summary

Enrollment Motivation Survey: Fall 2023

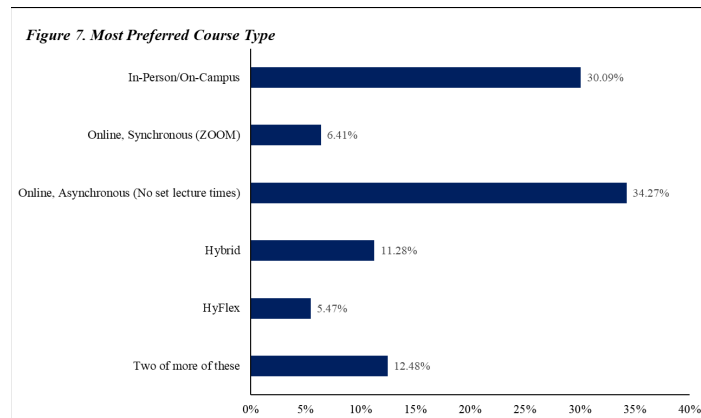
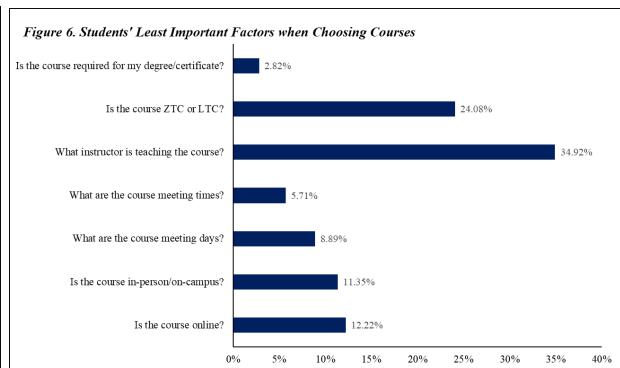
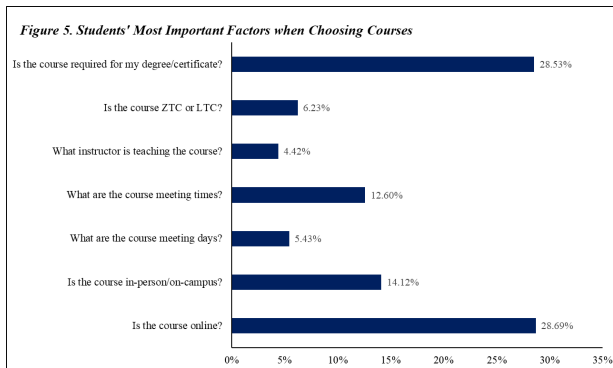
Background & Purpose

The Non-Returning Students Survey conducted in Summer of 2023 revealed that approximately 30.4% of students who do not return to MJC do so as a result of issues with course scheduling and/or registration (MJC PRIIE Office, 2023). More specifically, students who do not return to MJC cite not being able to get the courses they need in the times/days/modalities that work best for their life schedule, being waitlisted for required courses, and lack of guidance on what courses to take as major factors in their decision to not return to campus. Given that these factors are institutional challenges and largely revolve around course offerings and scheduling, it is necessary to explore student preferences & motivation as it relates to course enrollment at MJC.

The purpose of this survey was to (1) identify which factors Modesto Junior College students consider when enrolling in courses each semester and (2) examine the impact of course enrollment on student academic integration, degree commitment, institutional commitment, and support services satisfaction.

Results

- Total Number of Partial/Completed Responses: 1,832 out of 17,880 enrolled students (10% Response Rate)



- Correlational Analysis
 - Significant positive correlation between online course preference and academic integration ($r(1223) = .066, p = .021$), degree commitment ($r(1201) = .116, p < .001$), institutional commitment ($r(1177) = .067, p = .021$), and support services satisfaction ($r(1174) = .068, p = .020$)
 - Significant positive correlation between in-person course preference and academic integration ($r(1219) = .066, p = .022$)

Discussion & Recommendations

Through the “Factors Considered when Choosing Courses” items on the survey, we were able to gain some insight on what students identified as the most important factors when registering for courses this semester. The top two factors students took into consideration when registering for their courses this semester were modality (specifically if the course was offered online) and degree requirements and applicability. As further evidence of these reported preferences, 40.7% of respondents stated that they prefer taking online classes over any other course modality with 34.3% of those respondents preferring online-asynchronous courses. Additionally, on average, respondents reported that they are more motivated to enroll in courses that fulfill their degree/certificate requirements ($M = 4.67, SD = 0.86; n = 1,339$) and courses that fulfill their credit requirement ($M = 4.40, SD = 1.04; n = 1,333$). The above findings, coupled with “Scheduling Issues” and “Wanting to Focus on Courses Needed for Major” being two of the main themes present the thematic analysis on why students chose to drop a course, suggest that it may prove beneficial to offer courses related to student’s major in a variety of modalities and time/day tracks to ensure students are able to complete their degree/certificate in a timely manner. Future research should be done to determine the effectiveness of current program course scheduling practices and the impact of current program scheduling practices on students’ persistence and ability to complete their degree within three years.

This study also shed some light on how students’ academic integration, degree commitment, institutional commitment, and support services satisfaction correlate with their reported enrollment behavior. A statistically significant positively correlation was found between a student’s motivation to enroll in online courses and their feeling of academic integration (i.e. how well/much the student: understands lectures, believes faculty care about their intellectual growth, takes interest in class discussions, and sees a connection between their courses and career path). This positive correlation was also found between a student’s feeling of academic integration and their motivation to enroll in face-to-face courses, suggesting that modality may not have a large impact on a student’s feeling of positive interaction in the academic environment. There was also a significant positive correlation between a student’s motivation to enroll in online courses and their reported degree commitment and their reported institutional commitment. This suggests that students enrolling in online courses may be not only more set on their degree/certificate path than students who prefer to enroll in other course modalities, but also more set on earning their degree/certificate specifically from MJC. Given that these correlations are based on self-reported measures, future research should look to identifying/developing non-self-reported measures of academic integration, degree commitment, institutional commitment, and support services satisfaction as a way to further understand the correlations found in this analysis.